Anti - Ballistic
Pixelations
$2.95 US
$4.15 CAN
#5
Gremlin Trouble

Gremlin Trouble

Book #5

"Fun with Electricity", part 2, by E.T. Bryan and Elizabeth Bryan

Back cover and letters page art: **Michael Vega:** Manga/Anthropomorphic artist devoted to the comics scene. He is available for commission work depending on content. You may write to him at 8800 Carvalho Ct., Bakersfield CA 93311, USA.

Electronic Pre-press: **Dean Anderson** for **Page One**, Irvine California
Printer: **Brenner Printing Company**, San Antonio Texas.

Beta readers: Lee Leduc, Jerry Loppollo, Martin Shotzberger

Recap:

Mankind's machines have always been plagued by Gremlins. This is the story of Cypher, a fallen stormfairy turned gremlin princess who happens to live next to the ultimate machine - - a 3 mile diameter, fully automated enforced environment device, also known to its 100 million inhabitants as The City.

The story to date: Cypher "rescues" a fairy prince who happens into the gremlin's domain, in the hopes that she can get him to kiss her and thereby turn back into a stormfairy. Unfortunately, events in the city interfere as the Sorcerer General, aided by his own gremlin slaves, steals a critical part from the city's thermonuclear reactor, it's only primary power source. Should the reactor fail, most of the city's population would parish; which prompts Dr. Candy Tsai to enlist Cypher's promise of aid. The gremlin's solution is the building of a new reactor part using a molecular manipulator residing in the Hazardous Technology Burial Crypt, which lies under the Gremlin's home, the Enchanted Toxic Waste Dump.

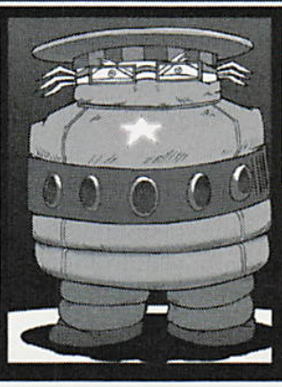
Back at the City, the Sorcerer General implements the second part of his plan by attempting to destroy the one remaining reactor tube, but is only partly successful due to the intervention of Hex, a winged Gremlin Prince unknown to the local Gremlin Guild. When Hex tries to subvert the Sorcerer General's slaves, he is trapped by the Chief Imp, while the damaged reactor has only hours before it fails completely.

Cypher: Has an implicit understanding of all aspects of technology. Can change size from 9" tall to 5'4". Her dream is to someday kiss a fairy prince and thereby turn back into a winged stormfairy.

Cam: Cypher's friend and advisor. Former Guild foreman

Dr. Candy Tsai: Part time temporary head technical director of the city's computer system, and aspiring idol singer.

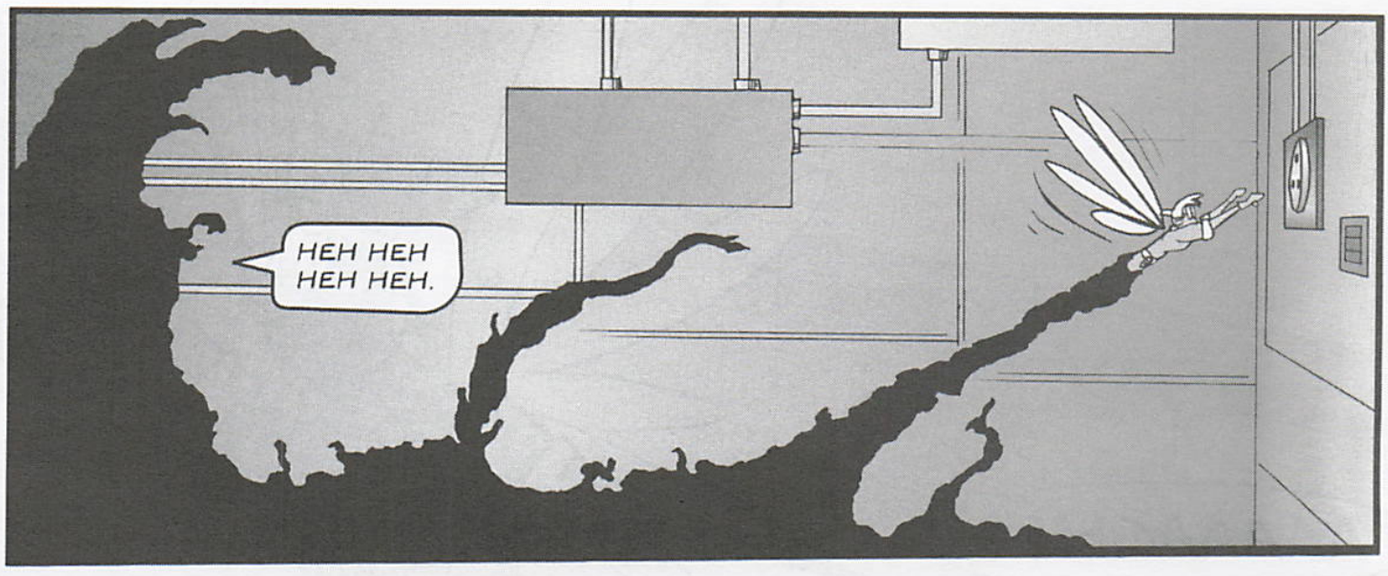
Del Delage: High Commissioner for security and one of the City's most promising young administrators, by virtue of her intelligence, drive and completely amoral attitude. Advanced degrees in law and black magic.

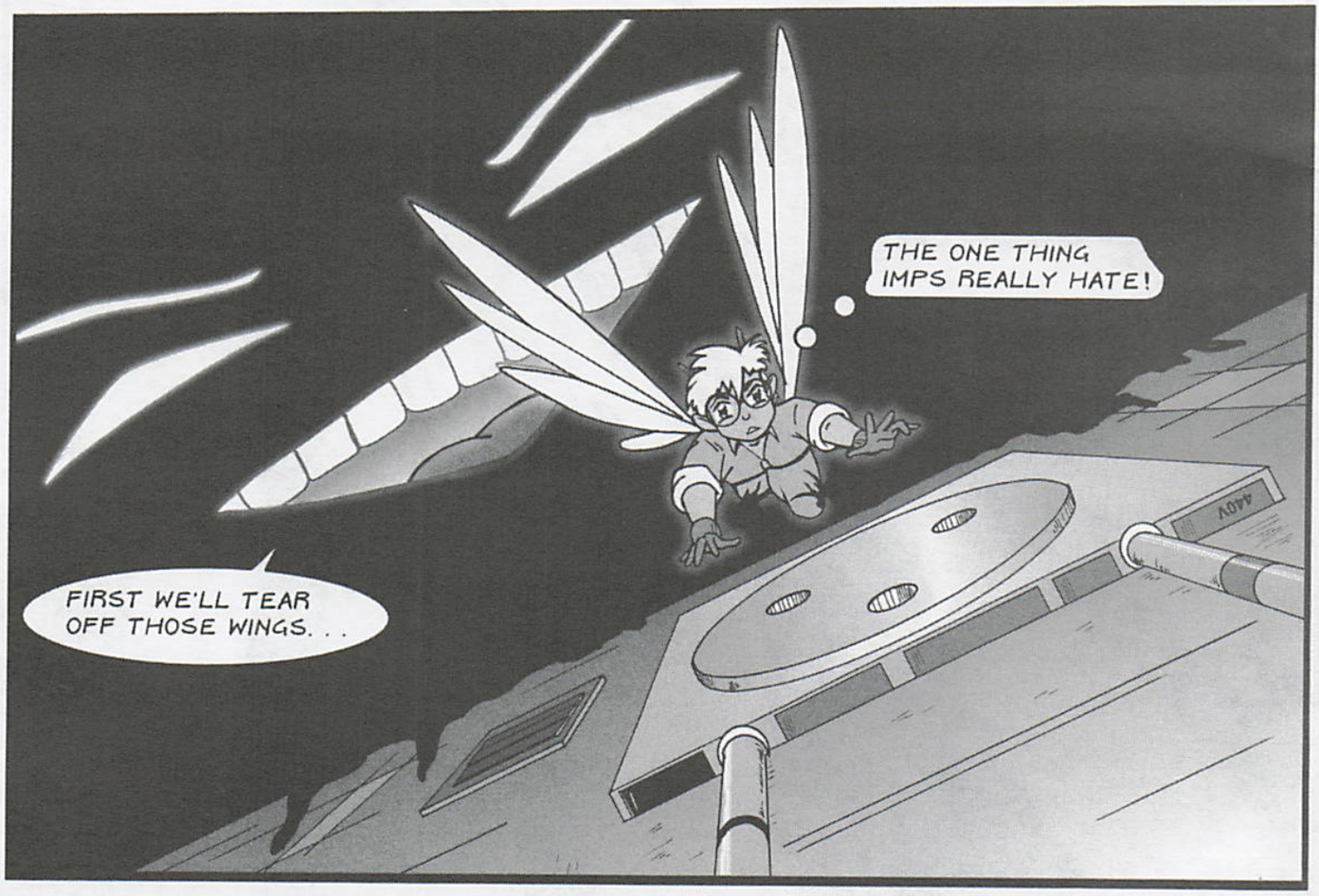


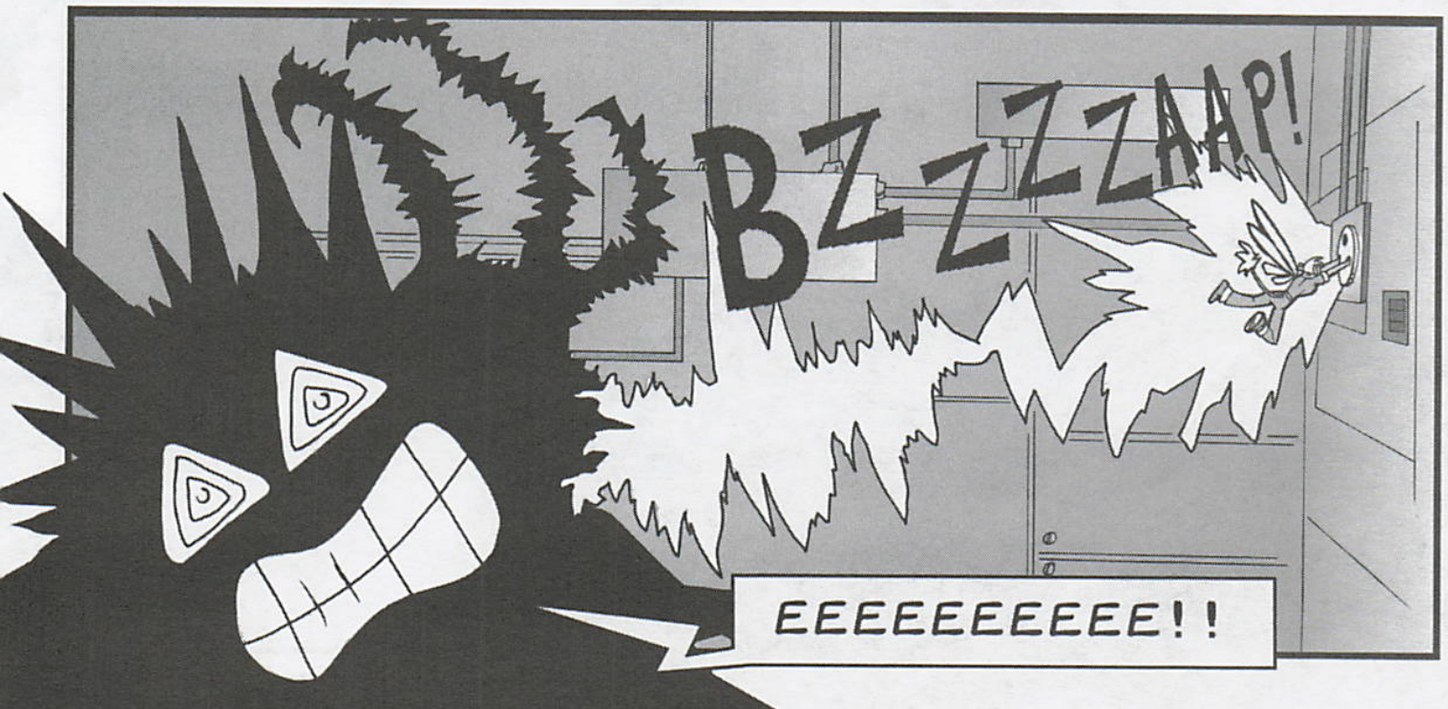
Sorcerer General: Former professor of magic at Fernwood U. Specializes in the control of Imps.

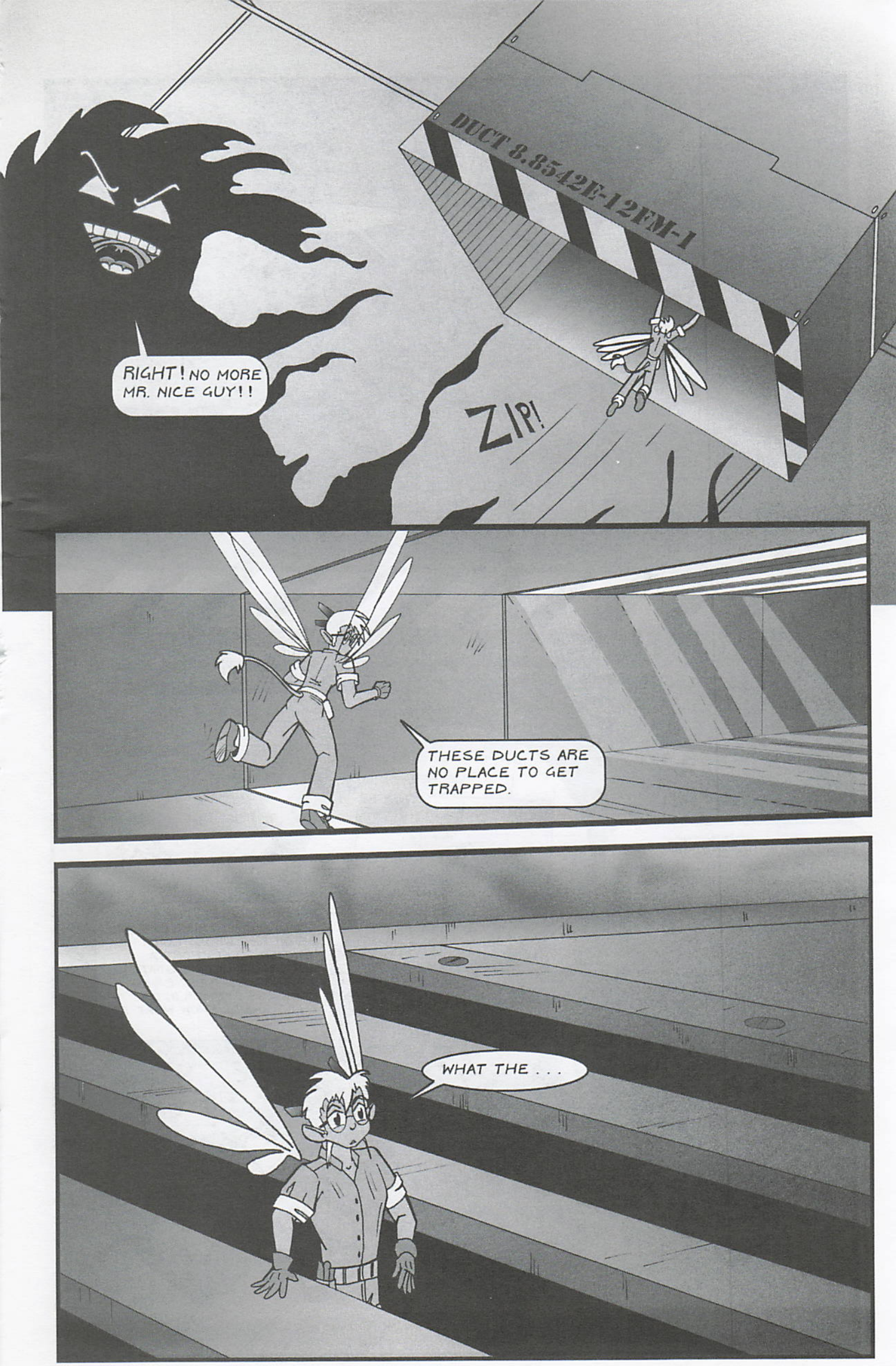
The Chief Imp: Tore off Cypher's wings when she was a stormfairy.

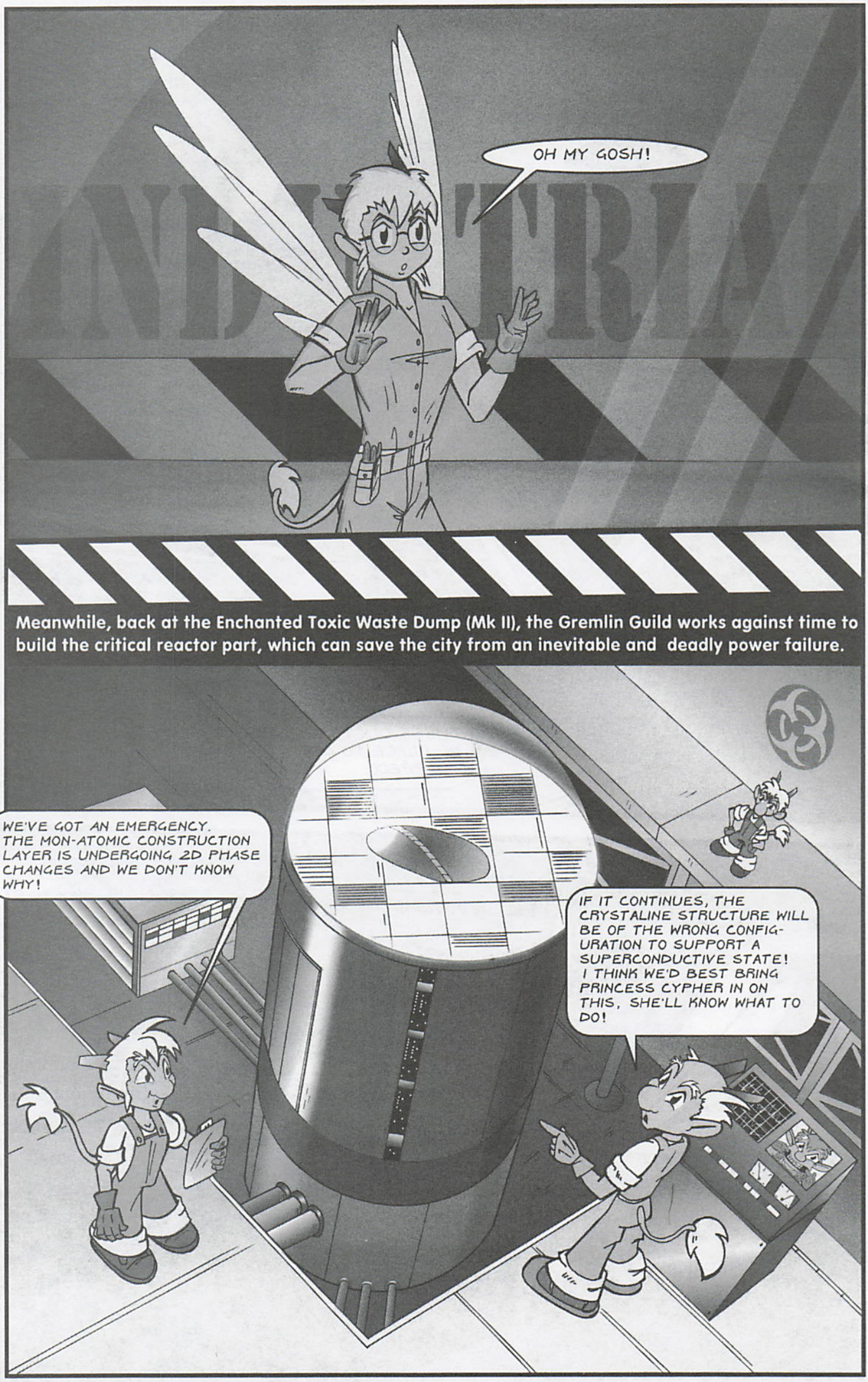
AAAAAGH!!

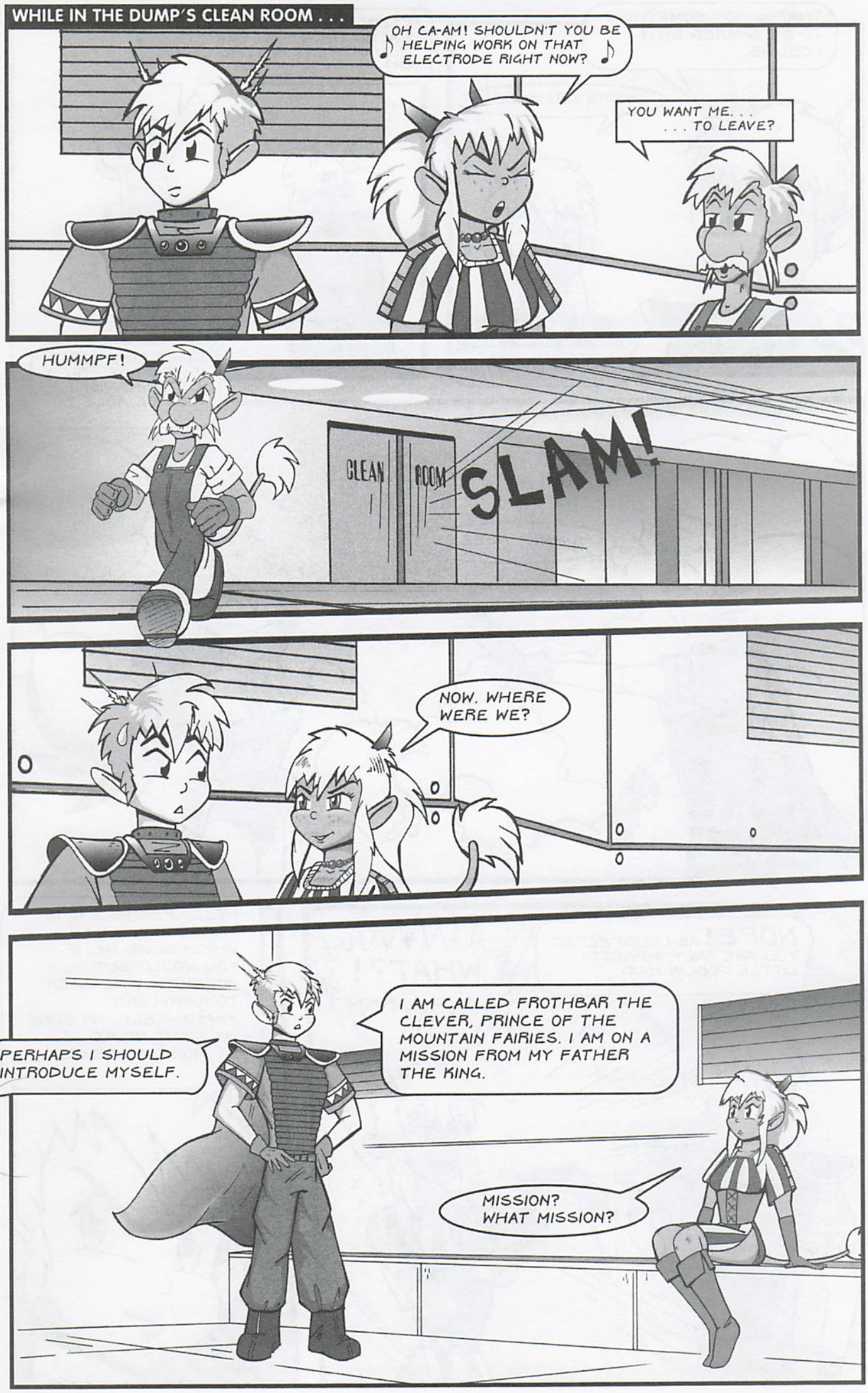

HEH HEH
HEH HEH.

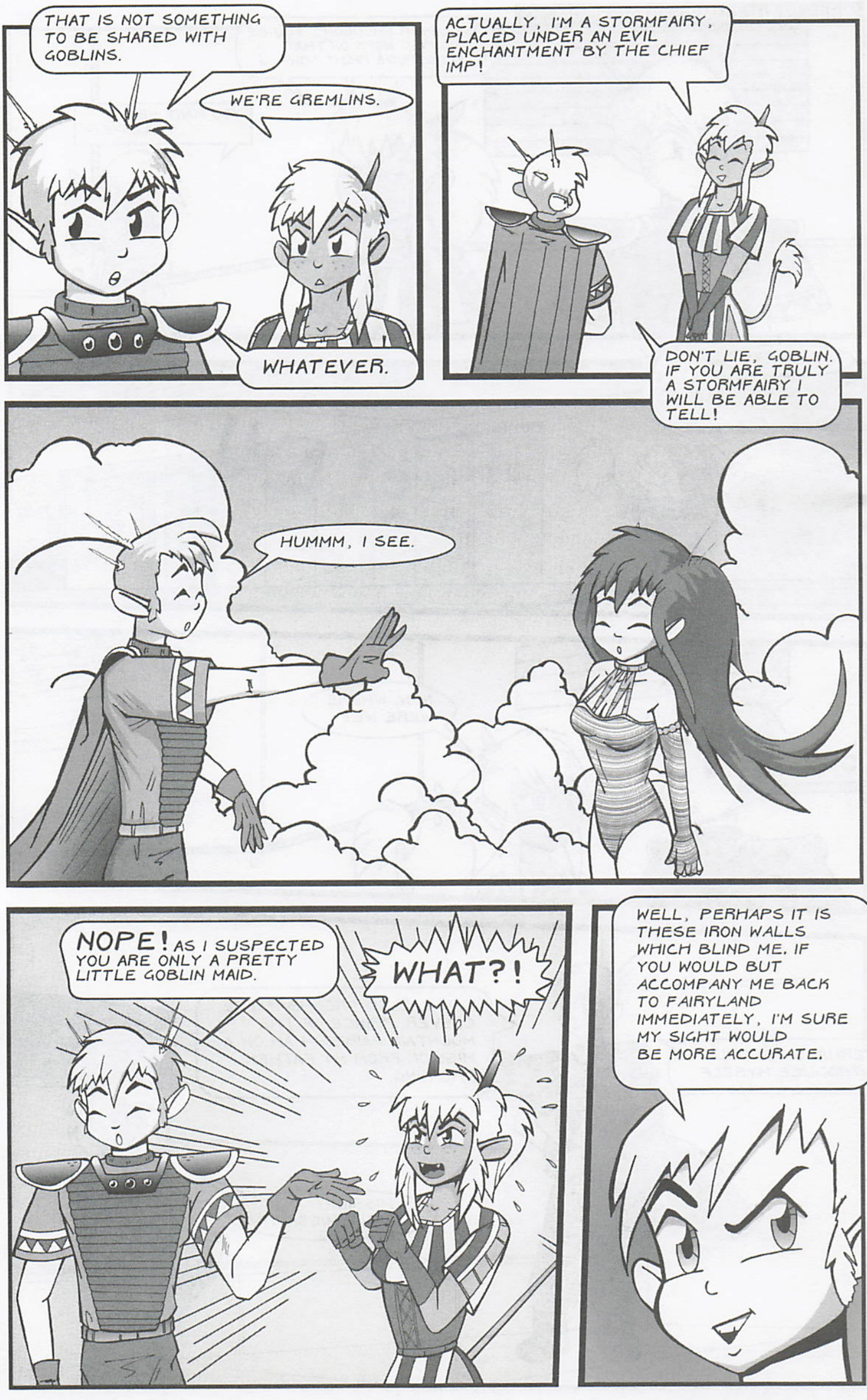

THE ONE THING
IMPS REALLY HATE!
FIRST WE'LL TEAR
OFF THOSE WINGS. . .
440V

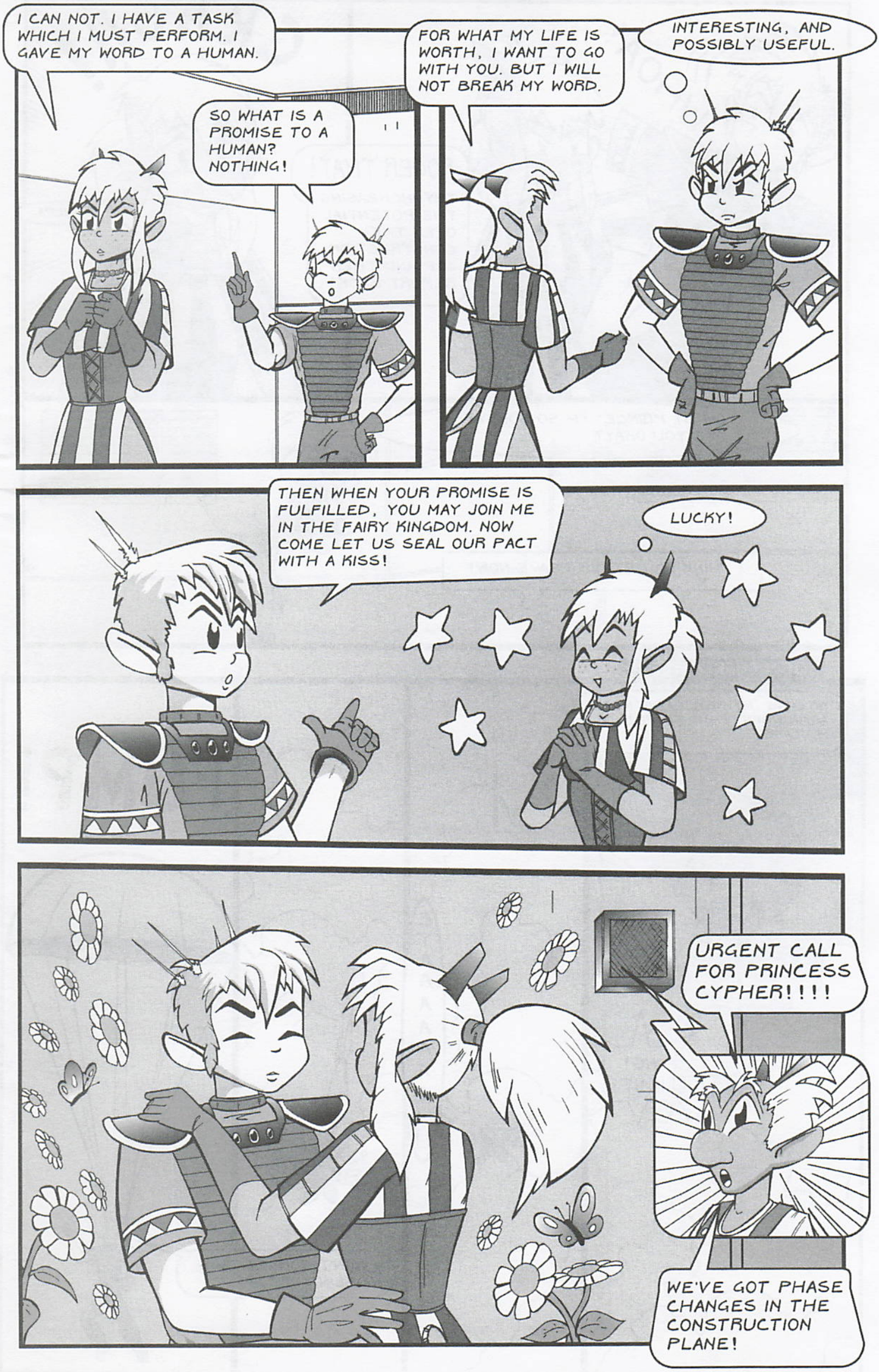

BZZZZAAP!
EEEEEEEEEEE!!

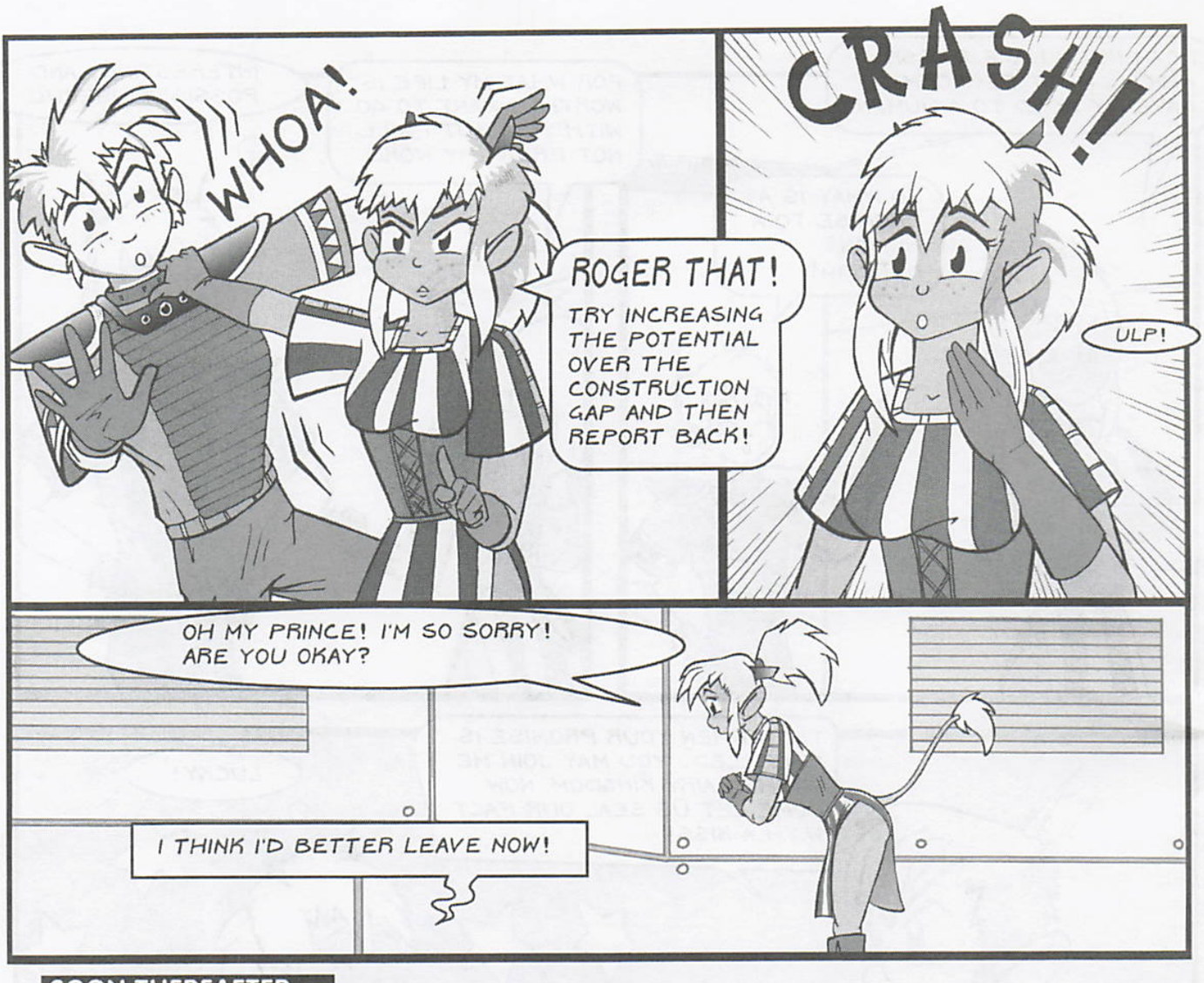

DUCT 8.8542E-12FM-1
RIGHT! NO MORE MR. NICE GUY!!
ZIP!
THESE DUCTS ARE NO PLACE TO GET TRAPPED.
WHAT THE . . .

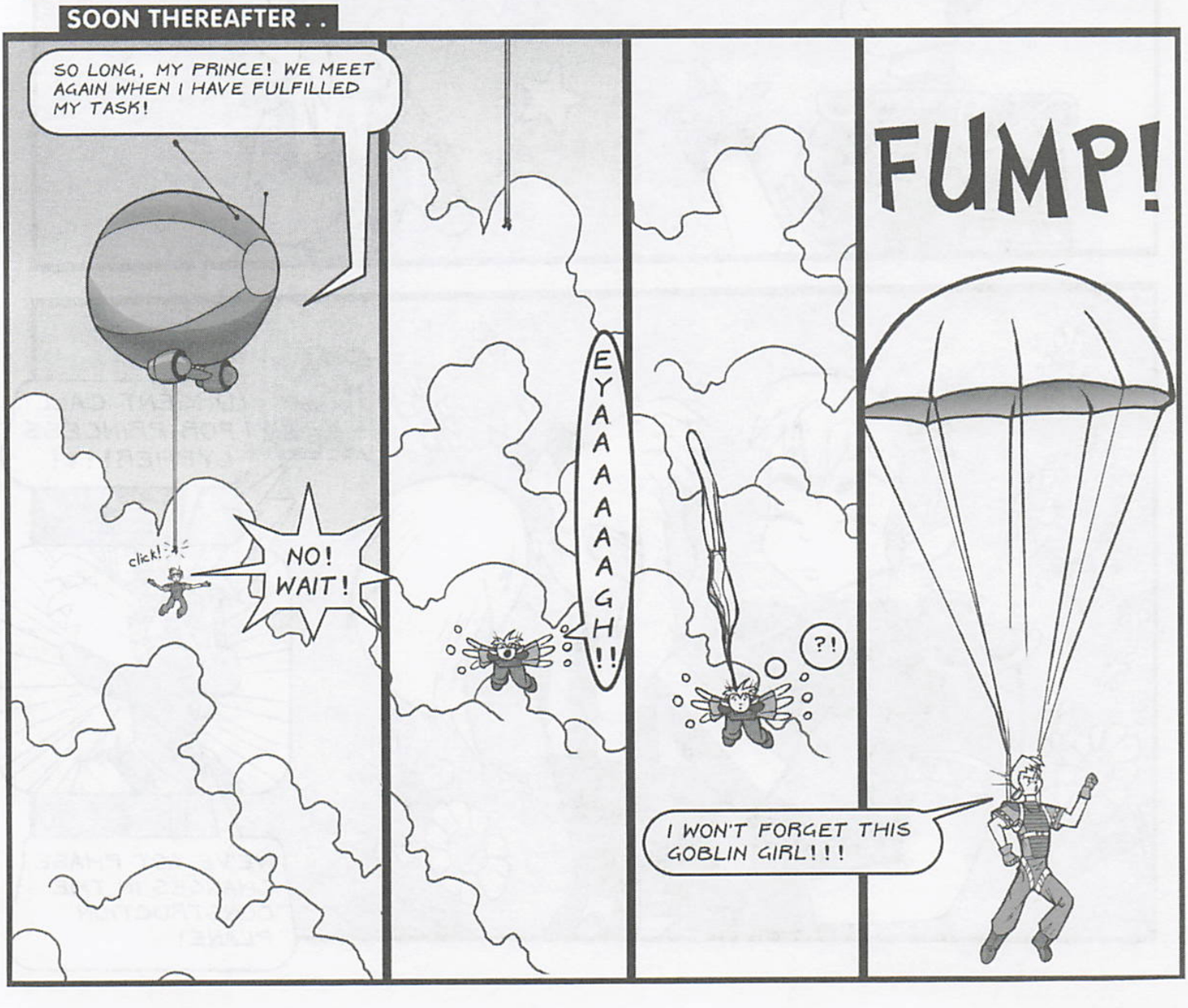

OH MY GOSH!
Meanwhile, back at the Enchanted Toxic Waste Dump (Mk II), the Gremlin Guild works against time to build the critical reactor part, which can save the city from an inevitable and deadly power failure.
WE'VE GOT AN EMERGENCY. THE MON-ATOMIC CONSTRUCTION LAYER IS UNDERGOING 2D PHASE CHANGES AND WE DON'T KNOW WHY!
IF IT CONTINUES, THE CRYSTALINE STRUCTURE WILL BE OF THE WRONG CONFIGURATION TO SUPPORT A SUPERCONDUCTIVE STATE! I THINK WE'D BEST BRING PRINCESS CYPHER IN ON THIS, SHE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO!

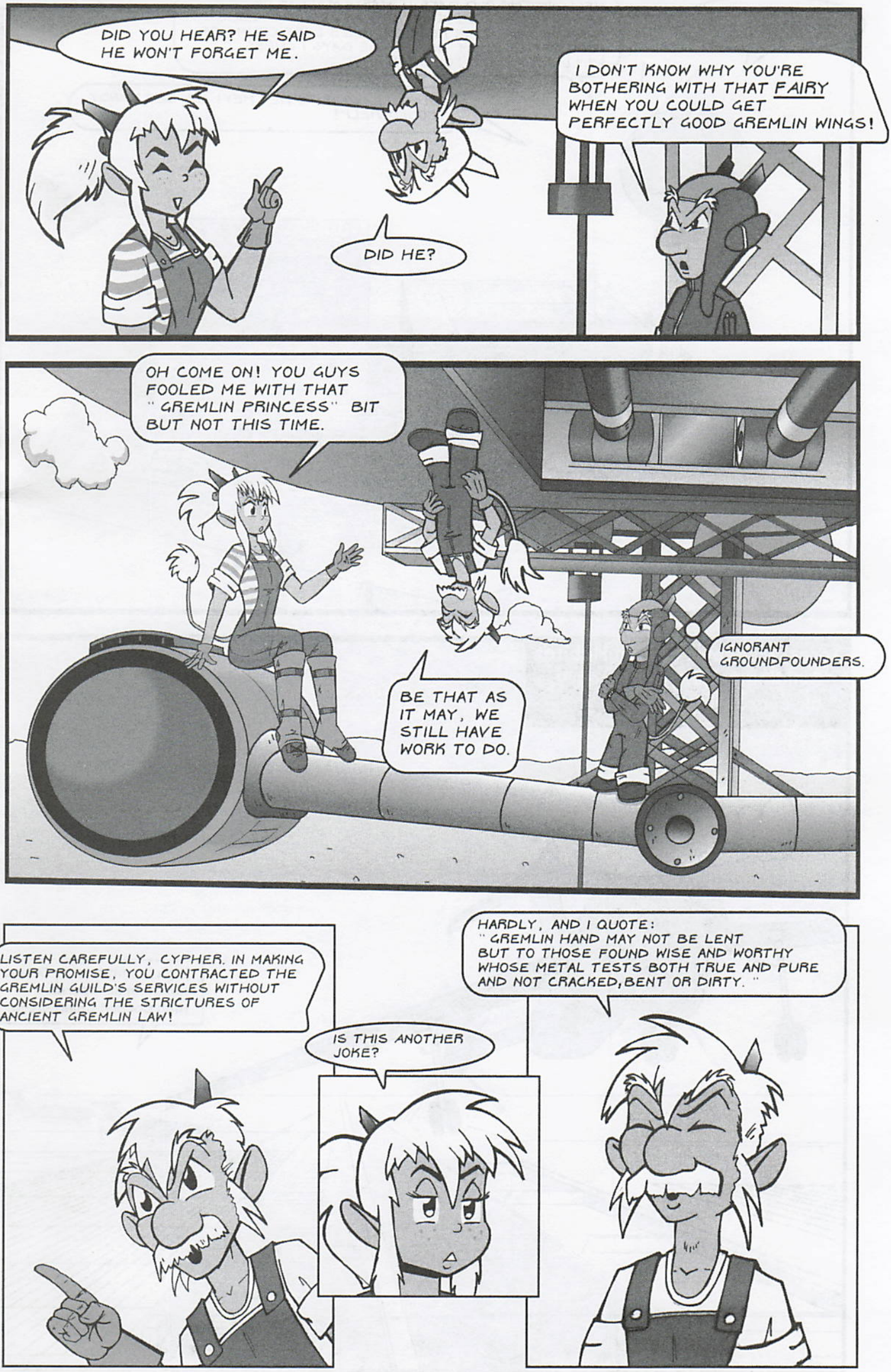

WHILE IN THE DUMP'S CLEAN ROOM . . .
♪ OH CA-AM! SHOULDN'T YOU BE HELPING WORK ON THAT ELECTRODE RIGHT NOW? ♪
YOU WANT ME. . . . . TO LEAVE?
HUMMPF!
CLEAN ROOM
SLAM!
NOW. WHERE WERE WE?
PERHAPS I SHOULD INTRODUCE MYSELF.
I AM CALLED FROTHBAR THE CLEVER, PRINCE OF THE MOUNTAIN FAIRIES. I AM ON A MISSION FROM MY FATHER THE KING.
MISSION? WHAT MISSION?

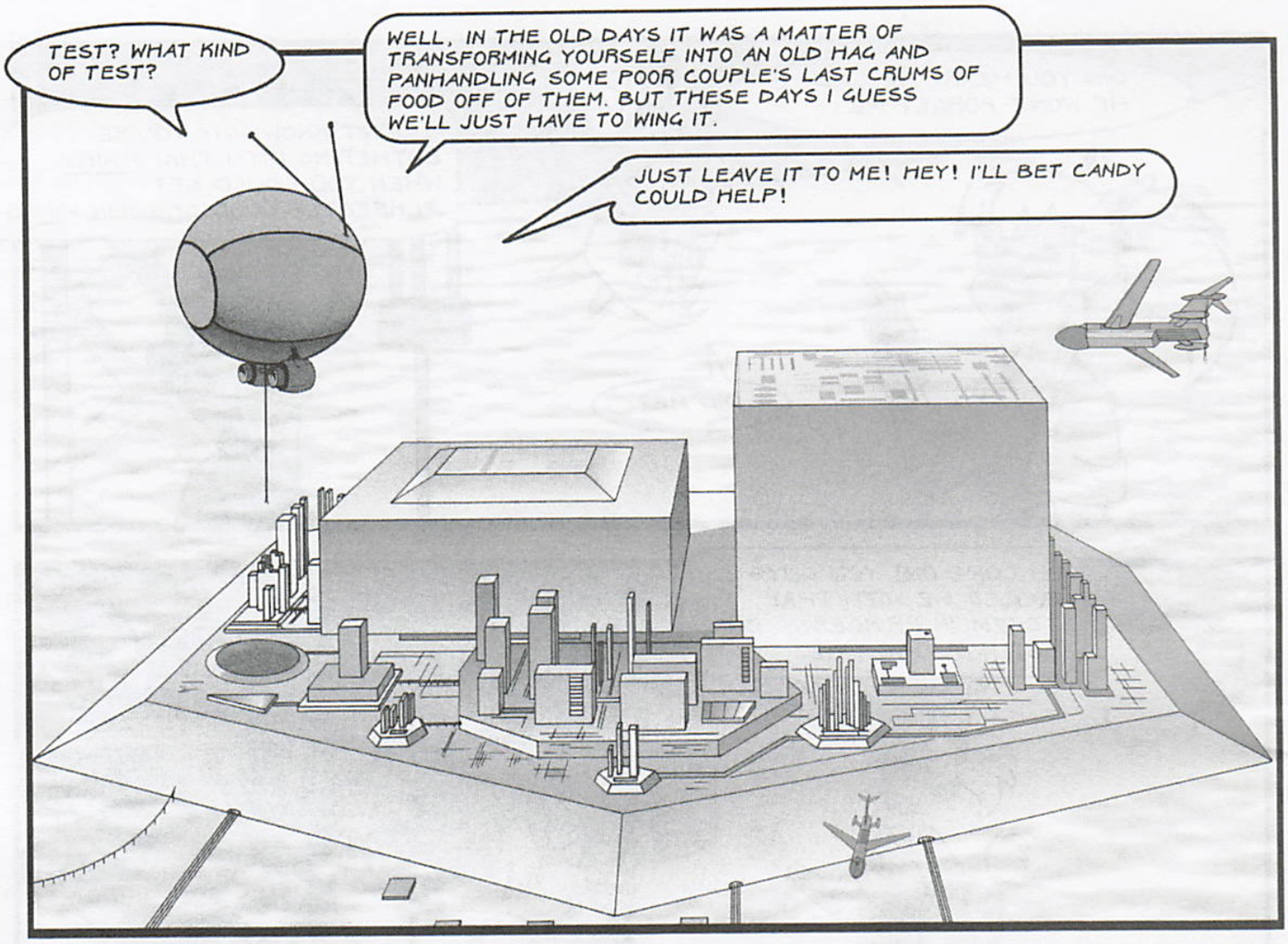

THAT IS NOT SOMETHING TO BE SHARED WITH GOBLINS.
WE'RE GREMLINS.
WHATEVER.
ACTUALLY, I'M A STORMFAIRY, PLACED UNDER AN EVIL ENCHANTMENT BY THE CHIEF IMP!
DON'T LIE, GOBLIN. IF YOU ARE TRULY A STORMFAIRY I WILL BE ABLE TO TELL!
HUMMM, I SEE.
NOPE! AS I SUSPECTED YOU ARE ONLY A PRETTY LITTLE GOBLIN MAID.
WHAT?!
WELL, PERHAPS IT IS THESE IRON WALLS WHICH BLIND ME. IF YOU WOULD BUT ACCOMPANY ME BACK TO FAIRYLAND IMMEDIATELY, I'M SURE MY SIGHT WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE.

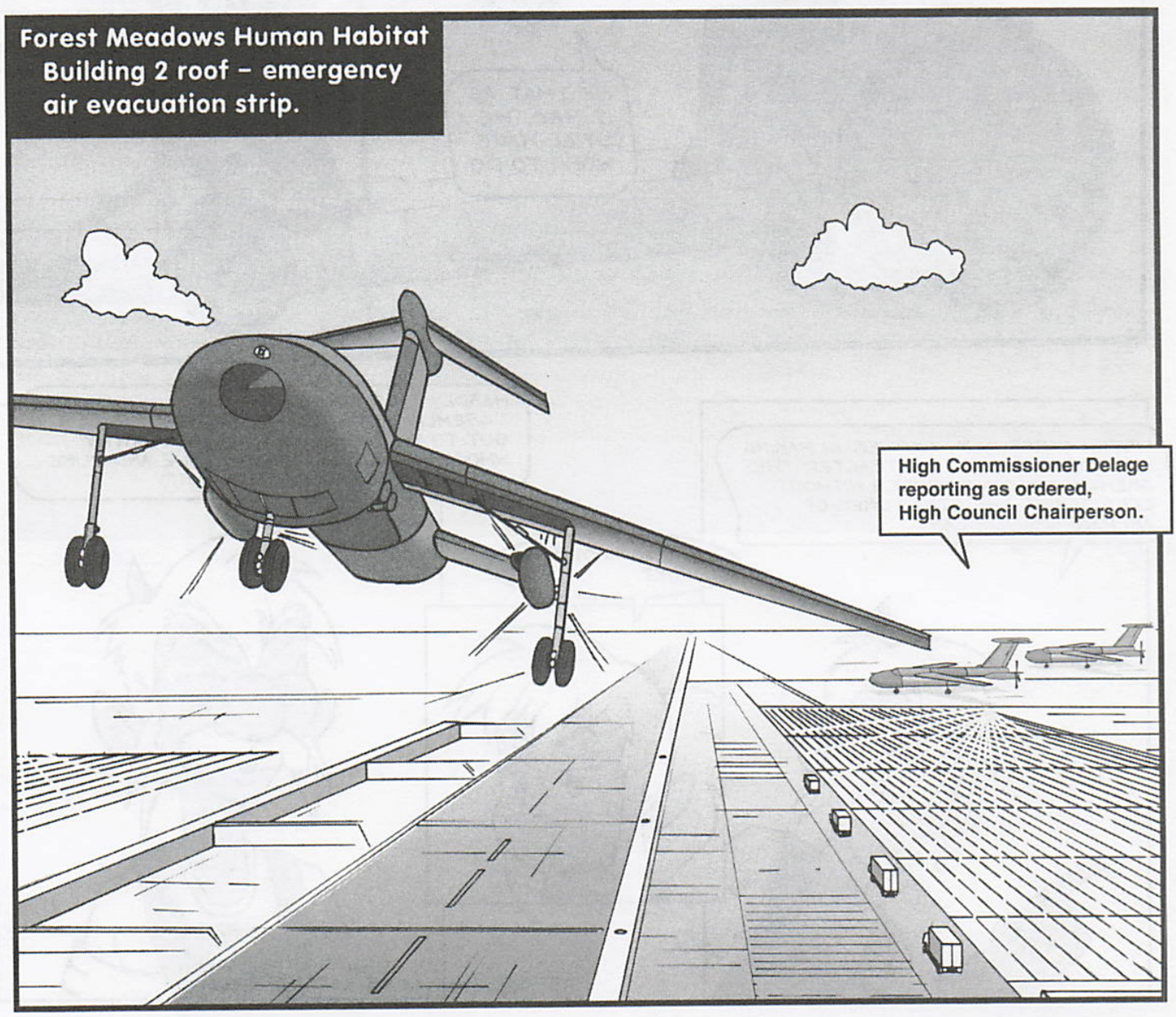

I CAN NOT. I HAVE A TASK WHICH I MUST PERFORM. I GAVE MY WORD TO A HUMAN.
SO WHAT IS A PROMISE TO A HUMAN? NOTHING!
FOR WHAT MY LIFE IS WORTH, I WANT TO GO WITH YOU. BUT I WILL NOT BREAK MY WORD.
INTERESTING, AND POSSIBLY USEFUL.
THEN WHEN YOUR PROMISE IS FULFILLED, YOU MAY JOIN ME IN THE FAIRY KINGDOM. NOW COME LET US SEAL OUR PACT WITH A KISS!
LUCKY!
URGENT CALL FOR PRINCESS CYPHER!!!!
WE'VE GOT PHASE CHANGES IN THE CONSTRUCTION PLANE!


WHOA!
ROGER THAT!
TRY INCREASING THE POTENTIAL OVER THE CONSTRUCTION GAP AND THEN REPORT BACK!
CRASH!
ULP!
OH MY PRINCE! I'M SO SORRY! ARE YOU OKAY?
I THINK I'D BETTER LEAVE NOW!

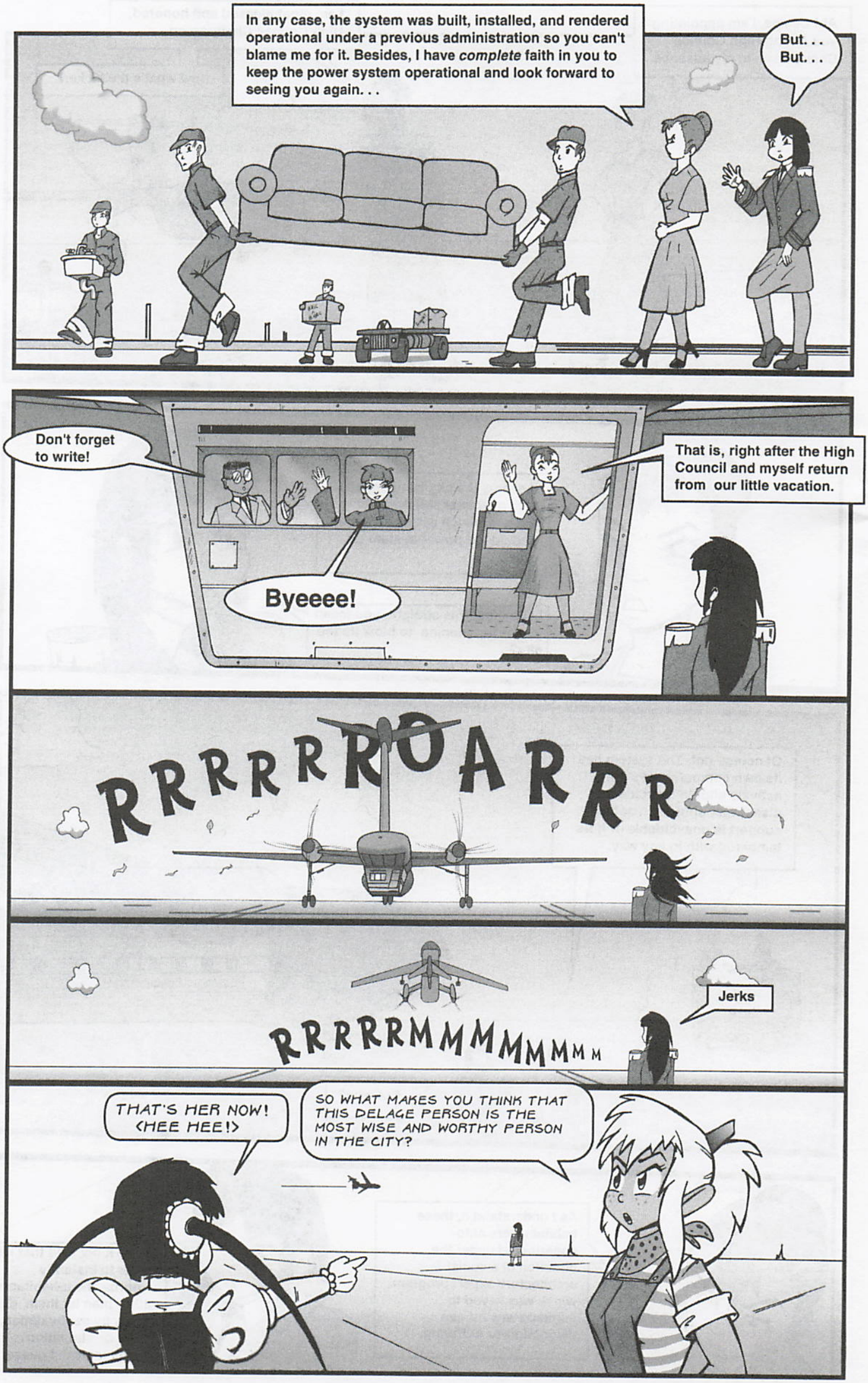

SOON THEREAFTER . .
SO LONG, MY PRINCE! WE MEET AGAIN WHEN I HAVE FULFILLED MY TASK!
click!
NO! WAIT!
EYAAAAAAGH!!
FUMP!
?!
I WON'T FORGET THIS GOBLIN GIRL!!!

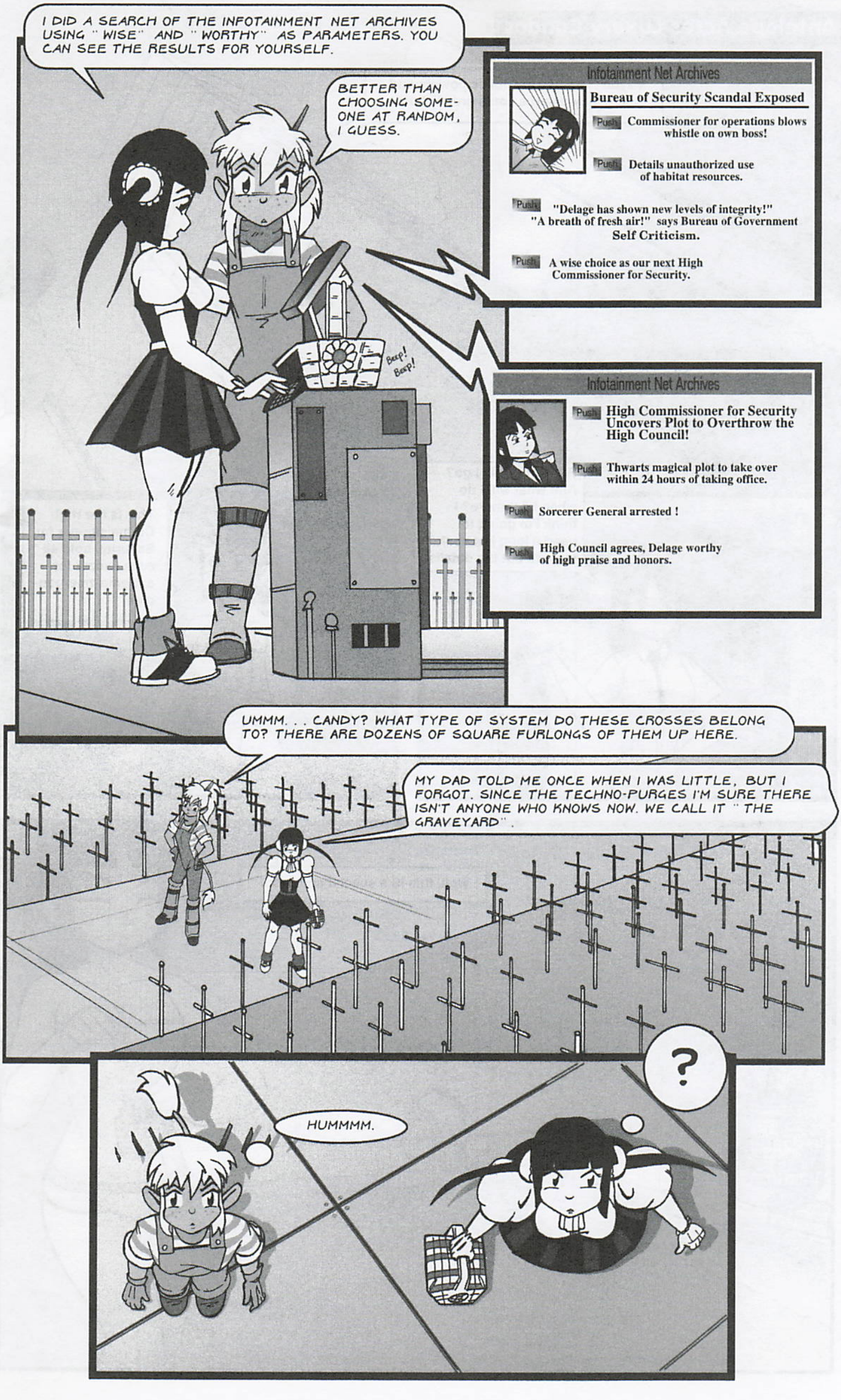

DID YOU HEAR? HE SAID HE WON'T FORGET ME.
DID HE?
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE BOTHERING WITH THAT FAIRY WHEN YOU COULD GET PERFECTLY GOOD GREMLIN WINGS!
OH COME ON! YOU GUYS FOOLED ME WITH THAT "GREMLIN PRINCESS" BIT BUT NOT THIS TIME.
BE THAT AS IT MAY, WE STILL HAVE WORK TO DO.
IGNORANT GROUNDPOUNDERS.
LISTEN CAREFULLY, CYPHER. IN MAKING YOUR PROMISE, YOU CONTRACTED THE GREMLIN GUILD'S SERVICES WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE STRICTURES OF ANCIENT GREMLIN LAW!
IS THIS ANOTHER JOKE?
HARDLY, AND I QUOTE: "GREMLIN HAND MAY NOT BE LENT BUT TO THOSE FOUND WISE AND WORTHY WHOSE METAL TESTS BOTH TRUE AND PURE AND NOT CRACKED, BENT OR DIRTY."

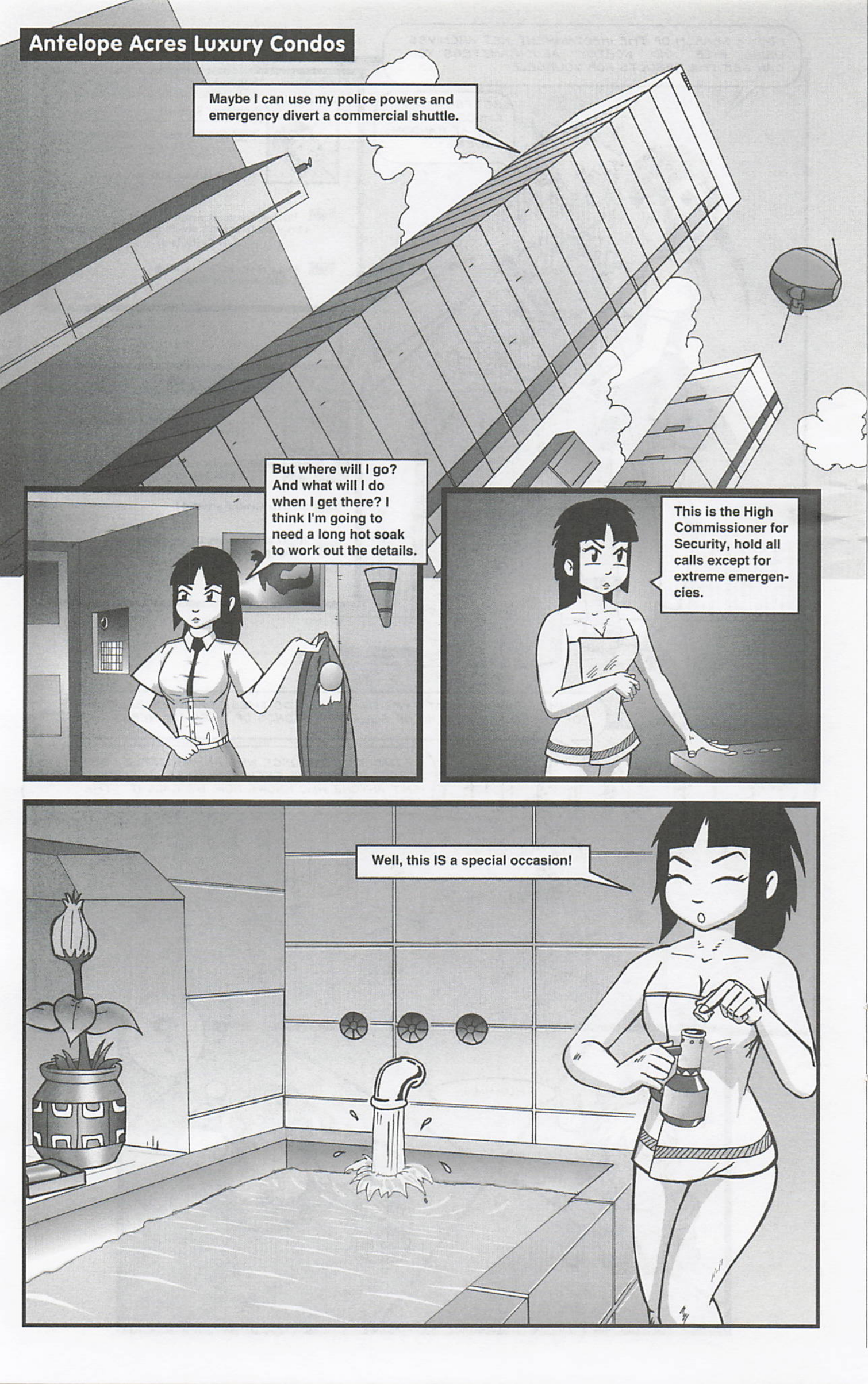

TEST? WHAT KIND OF TEST?
WELL, IN THE OLD DAYS IT WAS A MATTER OF TRANSFORMING YOURSELF INTO AN OLD HAG AND PANHANDLING SOME POOR COUPLE'S LAST CRUMS OF FOOD OFF OF THEM. BUT THESE DAYS I GUESS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WING IT.
JUST LEAVE IT TO ME! HEY! I'LL BET CANDY COULD HELP!


Forest Meadows Human Habitat
Building 2 roof – emergency
air evacuation strip.
High Commissioner Delage reporting as ordered, High Council Chairperson.

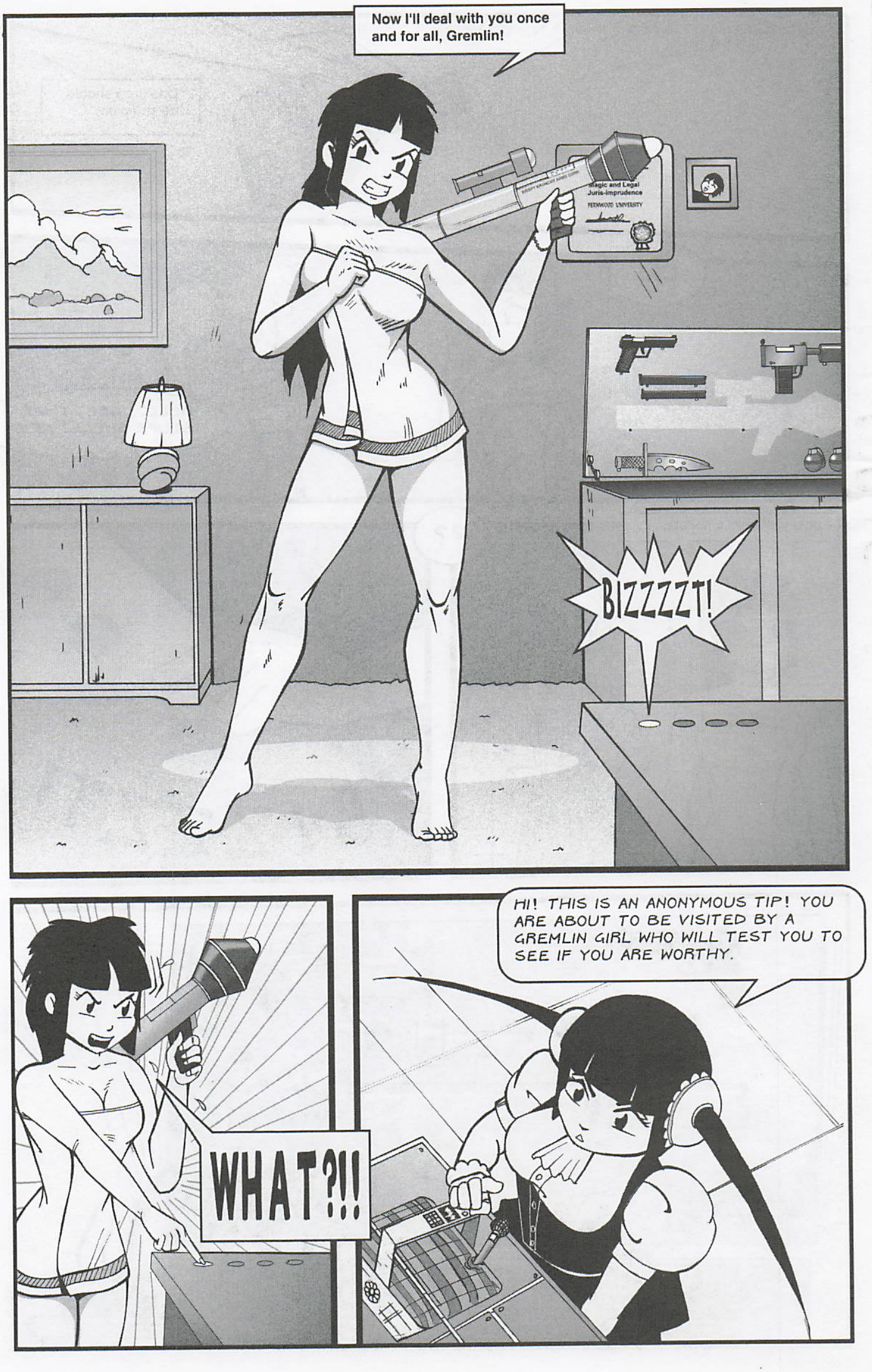
Ah! Delage. I am appointing you Acting High Council Chairperson in my absence.
I am most pleased and honored, High Council Chairperson.
Now what's the kicker?
It seems the city is equipped with a nuclear self destruct system which will be triggered should the power system go down.
Let me get this straight, you mean you're threatening to blow up the city?
Of course not. The system has its own computer and will activate should it decide a disastrous shutdown of life support is unavoidable or if it's tampered with in any way.
Passenger Container 1342
But why?
As I understand it, these habitats were auto-constructed under the direction of a social architecture expert program, which was keyed to minimize any human discomfort or suffering.
. . . so it decided that it's better to instantly vaporize the inhabitants rather than let them die slowly by asphyxiation, thirst, or starvation. Seems logical, I guess.

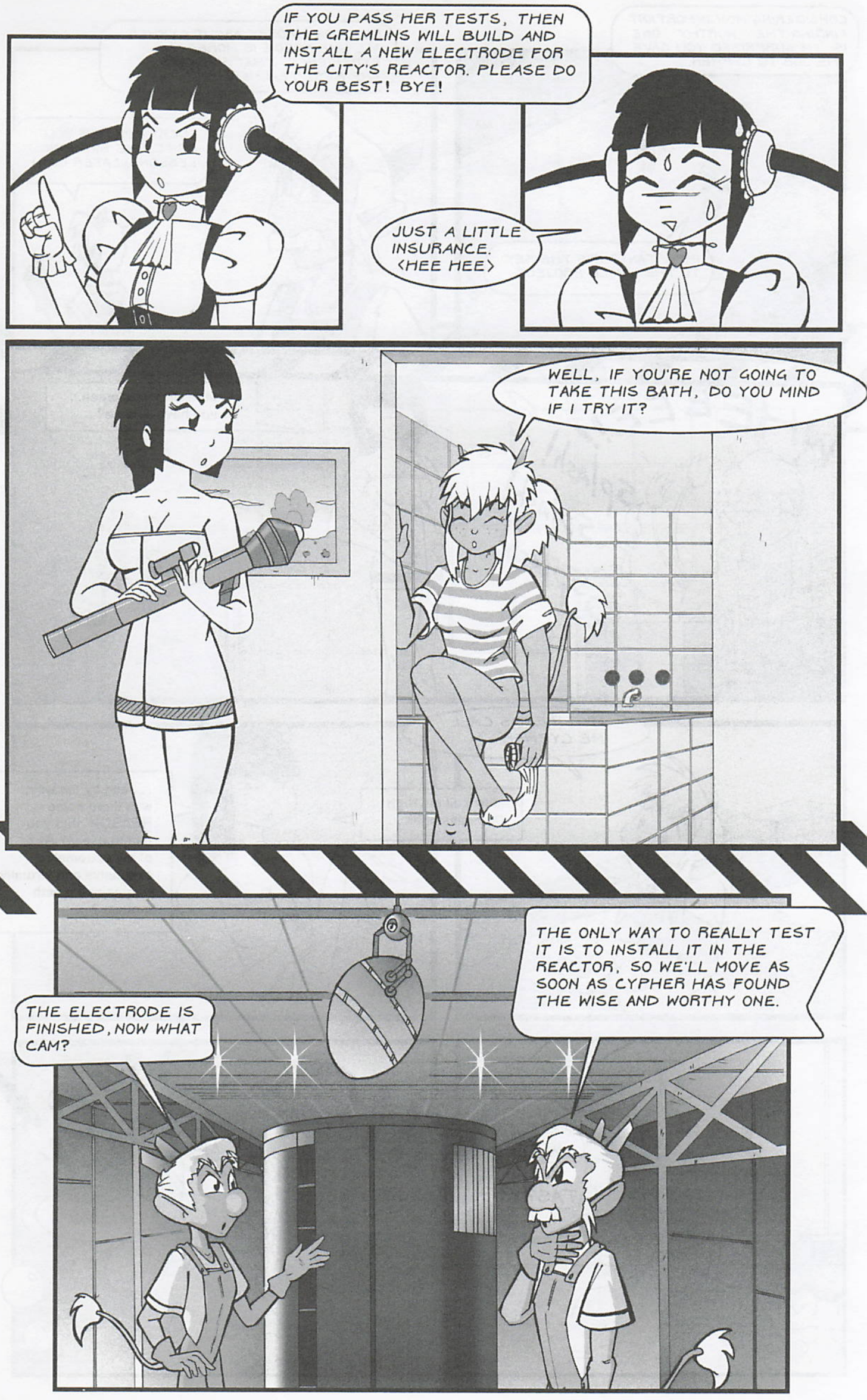

In any case, the system was built, installed, and rendered operational under a previous administration so you can't blame me for it. Besides, I have *complete* faith in you to keep the power system operational and look forward to seeing you again. . .
But. . .
But. . .
Don't forget to write!
Byeeee!
That is, right after the High Council and myself return from our little vacation.
RRRRRROARRR
RRRRRMMMMMMMMM
Jerks
THAT'S HER NOW! <HEE HEE!>
SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT THIS DELAGE PERSON IS THE MOST WISE AND WORTHY PERSON IN THE CITY?


I DID A SEARCH OF THE INFOTAINMENT NET ARCHIVES USING "WISE" AND "WORTHY" AS PARAMETERS. YOU CAN SEE THE RESULTS FOR YOURSELF.
BETTER THAN CHOOSING SOMEONE AT RANDOM, I GUESS.
Beep! Beep!
Infotainment Net Archives
Bureau of Security Scandal Exposed
Push Commissioner for operations blows whistle on own boss!
Push Details unauthorized use of habitat resources.
Push "Delage has shown new levels of integrity!" "A breath of fresh air!" says Bureau of Government Self Criticism.
Push A wise choice as our next High Commissioner for Security.
Infotainment Net Archives
Push High Commissioner for Security Uncovers Plot to Overthrow the High Council!
Push Thwarts magical plot to take over within 24 hours of taking office.
Push Sorcerer General arrested !
Push High Council agrees, Delage worthy of high praise and honors.
UMMM. . . CANDY? WHAT TYPE OF SYSTEM DO THESE CROSSES BELONG TO? THERE ARE DOZENS OF SQUARE FURLONGS OF THEM UP HERE.
MY DAD TOLD ME ONCE WHEN I WAS LITTLE, BUT I FORGOT. SINCE THE TECHNO-PURGES I'M SURE THERE ISN'T ANYONE WHO KNOWS NOW. WE CALL IT "THE GRAVEYARD".
?
HUMMMM.

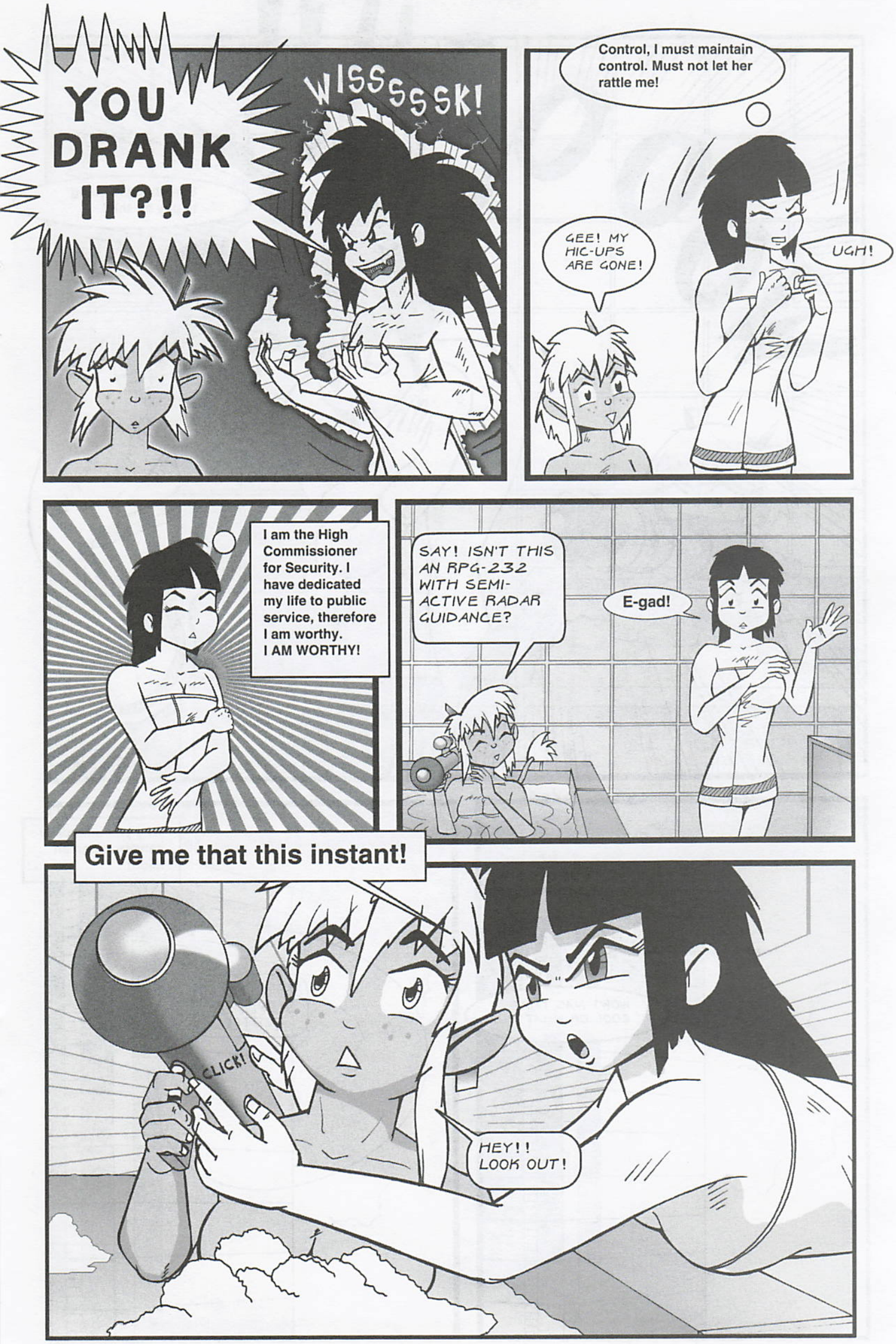

Antelope Acres Luxury Condos
Maybe I can use my police powers and emergency divert a commercial shuttle.
But where will I go? And what will I do when I get there? I think I'm going to need a long hot soak to work out the details.
This is the High Commissioner for Security, hold all calls except for extreme emergencies.
Well, this IS a special occasion!

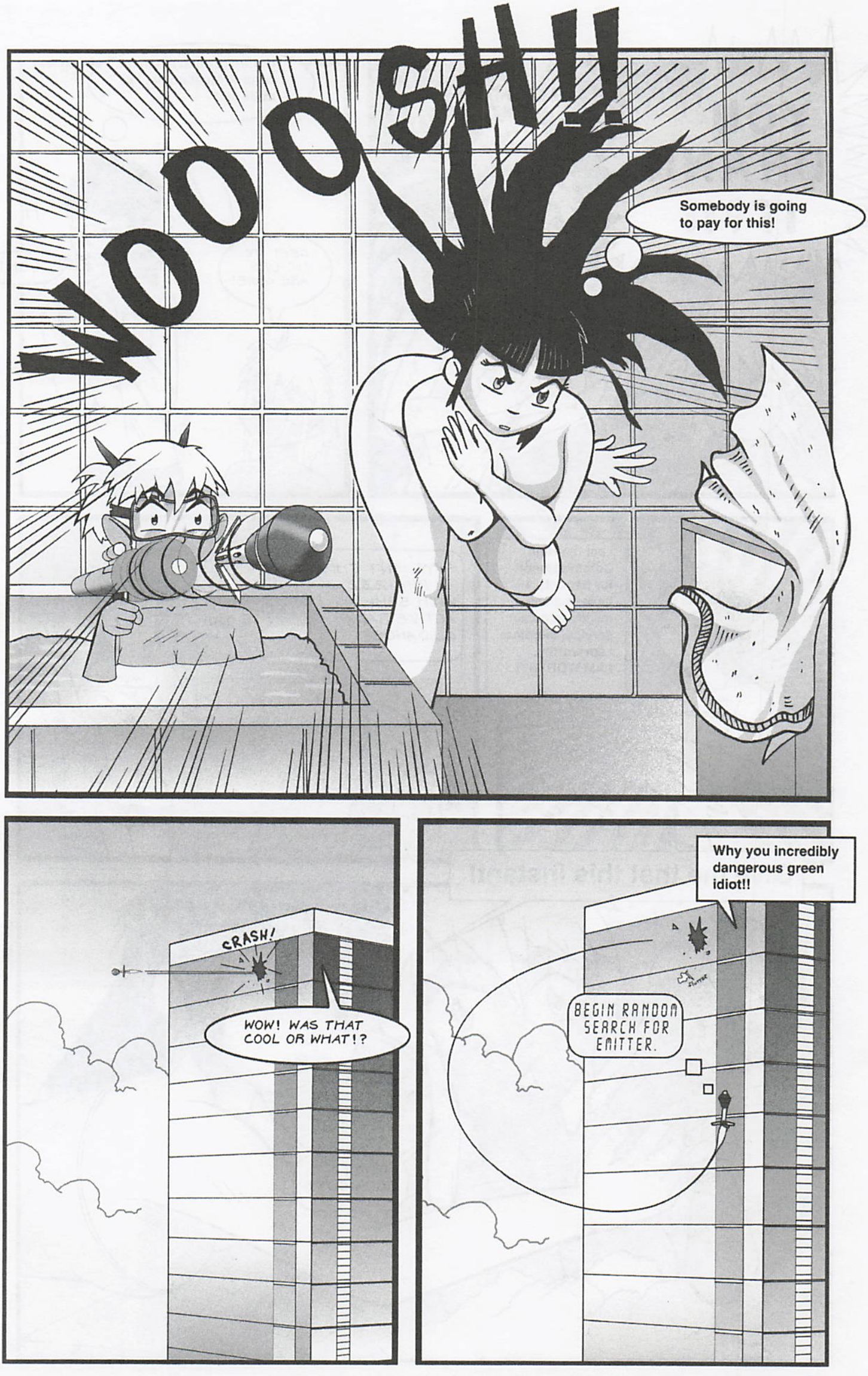
BAIN MOUSSE
One drop should be sufficient.
Oh!
HELLO, GEE, THAT STUFF SMELLS NICE!
Just wait here a minute, . . .
??
DEPLOY HOME DEFENSE WEAPONS
BIZZZT!
KER CHUNK!!

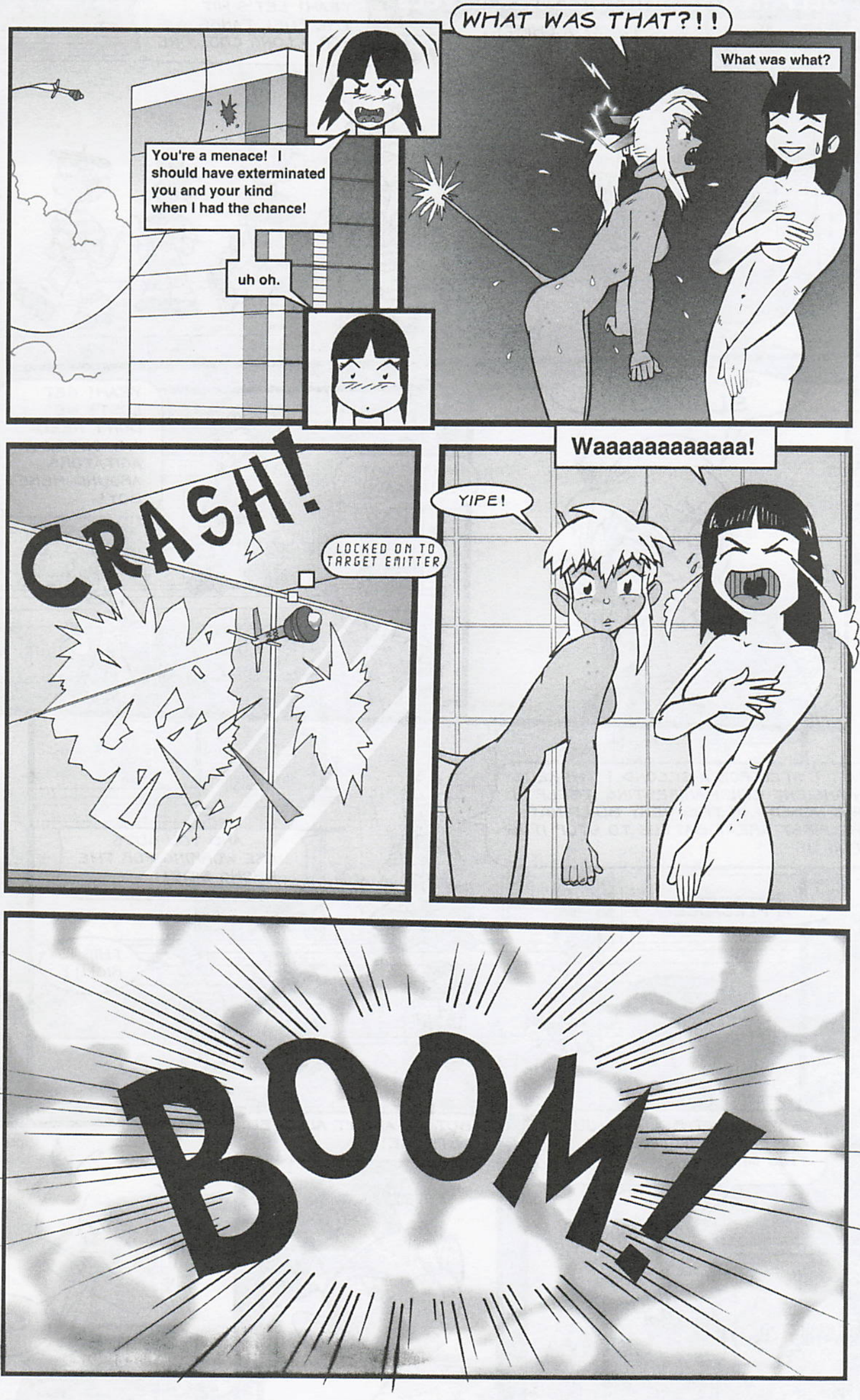

Now I'll deal with you once and for all, Gremlin!
Magic and Legal Juris-imprudence
FERMWOOD UNIVERSITY
BIZZZZT!
HI! THIS IS AN ANONYMOUS TIP! YOU ARE ABOUT TO BE VISITED BY A GREMLIN GIRL WHO WILL TEST YOU TO SEE IF YOU ARE WORTHY.
WHAT?!!


IF YOU PASS HER TESTS, THEN THE GREMLINS WILL BUILD AND INSTALL A NEW ELECTRODE FOR THE CITY'S REACTOR. PLEASE DO YOUR BEST! BYE!
JUST A LITTLE INSURANCE. <HEE HEE>
WELL, IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TAKE THIS BATH, DO YOU MIND IF I TRY IT?
THE ELECTRODE IS FINISHED, NOW WHAT CAM?
THE ONLY WAY TO REALLY TEST IT IS TO INSTALL IT IN THE REACTOR, SO WE'LL MOVE AS SOON AS CYPHER HAS FOUND THE WISE AND WORTHY ONE.

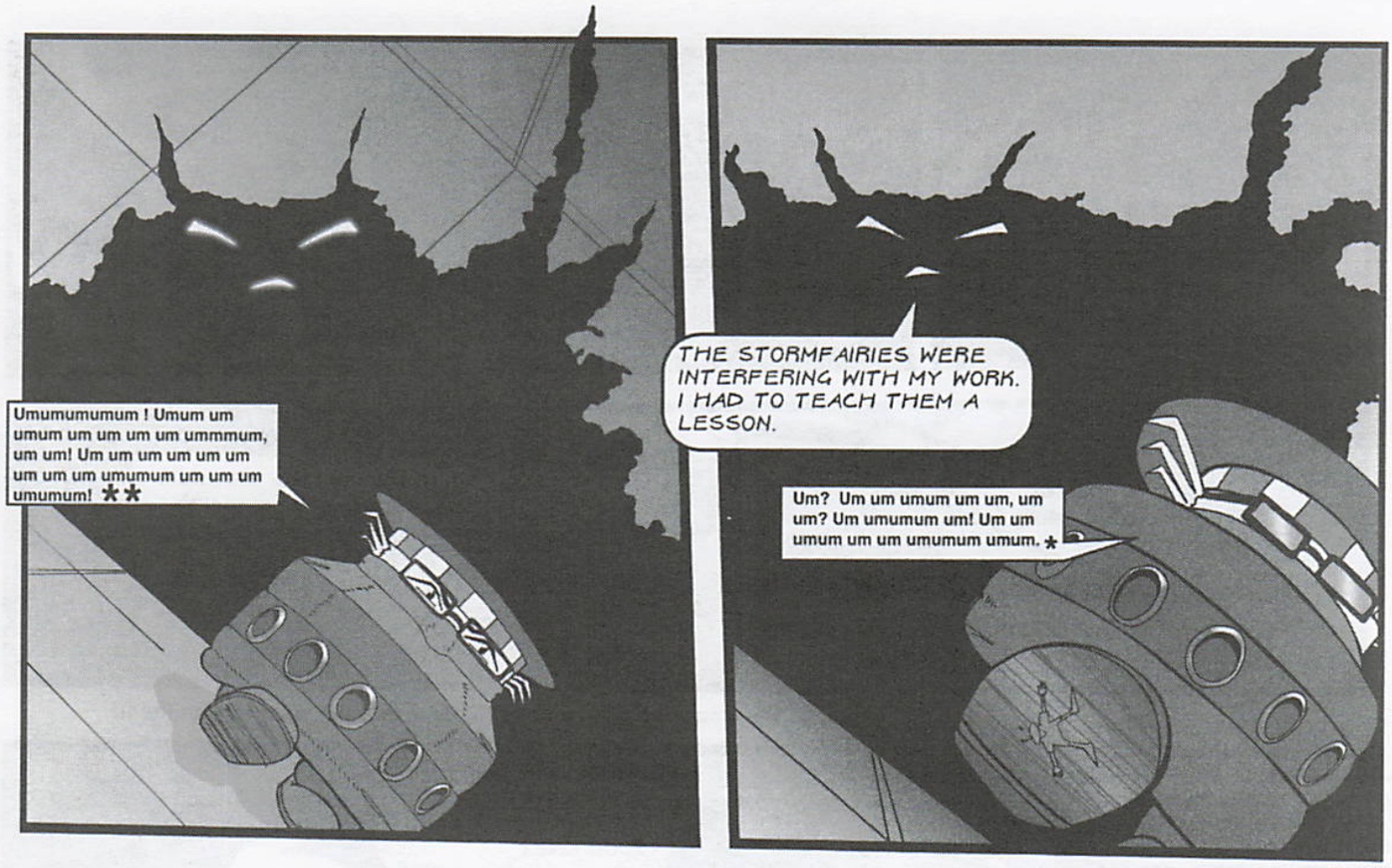
CONSIDERING HOW IMPORTANT FINDING THE "WORTHY" ONE IS, I'M SURPRISED YOU GAVE THE JOB TO CYPHER.
IMPORTANT? IT'S THE KEY TO THE WHOLE PROJECT.
BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT CYPHER, ALL SHE NEEDS IS MORE EXPERIENCE. THAT'S ALWAYS THE BEST TEACHER.
LUCKY FOR HER YOU DON'T GIVE SWIMMING LESSONS. LATER CAM!
WHEEEE!!
Splash! Splash! Splash!
So little Gremlin person... do you have a name?
MY FRIENDS CALL ME CYPHER.
Mine call me High Commissioner...
...and by the way, was there some REASON that you had to use up ALL of my extremely expensive and virtually unobtainable bath mousse?
WELL IT WAS VERY TASTY!
HIC
UP!
OOPS! PARDON.


YOU DRANK IT?!!
WISSSSSK!
Control, I must maintain control. Must not let her rattle me!
GEE! MY HIC-UPS ARE GONE!
UGH!
I am the High Commissioner for Security. I have dedicated my life to public service, therefore I am worthy. I AM WORTHY!
SAY! ISN'T THIS AN RPG-232 WITH SEMI-ACTIVE RADAR GUIDANCE?
E-gad!
Give me that this instant!
CLICK!
HEY!! LOOK OUT!


WOOOSH!!
Somebody is going to pay for this!
CRASH!
WOW! WAS THAT COOL OR WHAT!?
Why you incredibly dangerous green idiot!!
BEGIN RANDOM SEARCH FOR EMITTER.

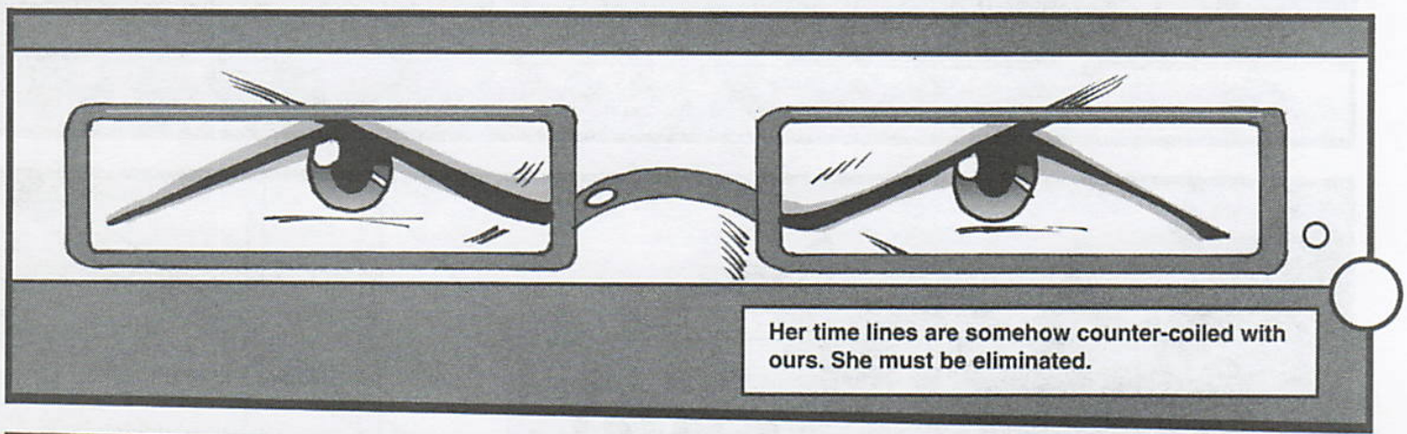

You're a menace! I should have exterminated you and your kind when I had the chance!
uh oh.
WHAT WAS THAT?!!
What was what?
CRASH!
LOCKED ON TO TARGET EMITTER
YIPE!
Waaaaaaaaaaaa!
BOOM!

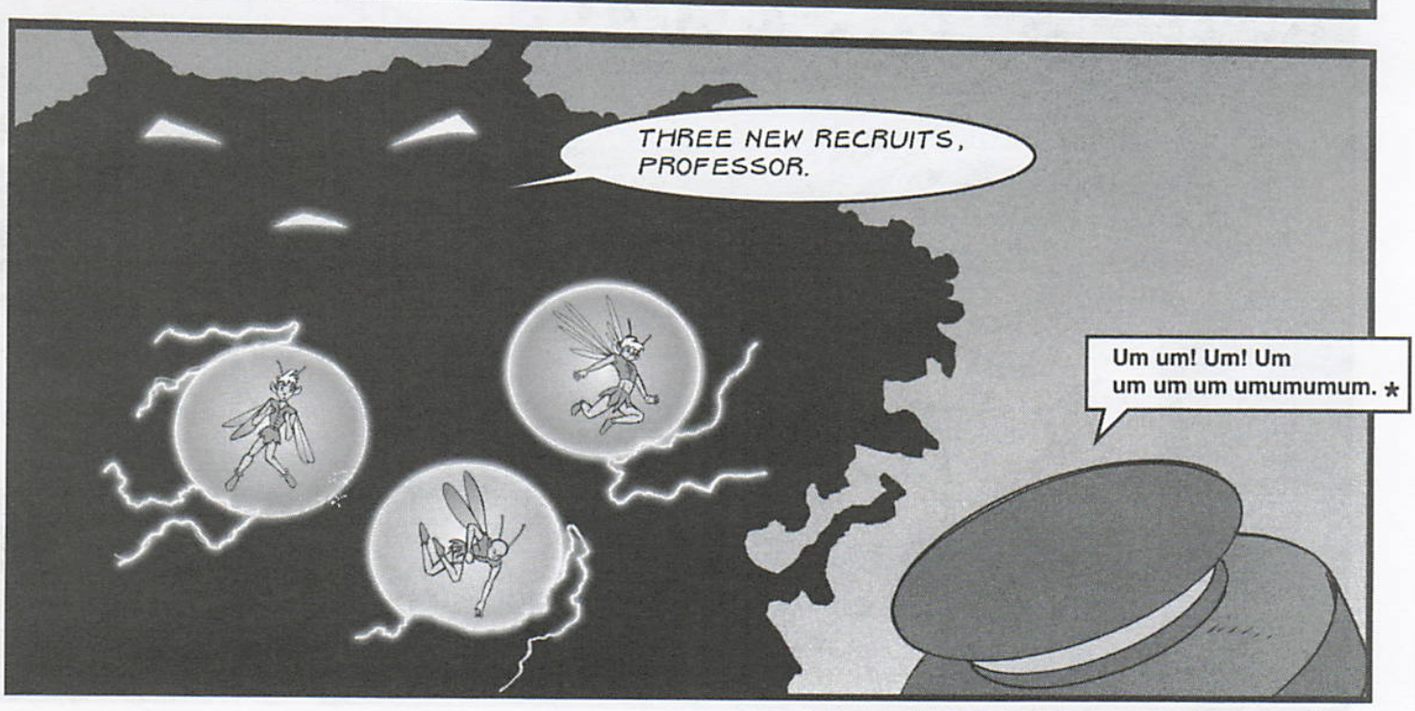
DEEP IN THE CITY'S LOWER LEVELS
WHAT A SHIFT! I DIDN'T THINK WE'D EVER GET DONE REPAIRING THAT THING.
YEAH! LET'S HIT THE FUEL TANKS FOR A LONG COOL ONE.
GOOD EVENING... SLAVES!
WHAT? NOT YOU AGAIN!
YEAH! GET LOST! WE DON'T NEED ANY OUTSIDE AGITATORS AROUND HERE, BOY!
101 RESTRICTED
JUST LISTEN FOR A SECOND ! THERE IS AN ANCIENT EVIL MANIFESTING ITSELF IN THIS WORLD - IN THIS VERY BUILDING! THE FIRST GREAT BATTLE TO STOP IT IS UPON US...
APPLESAUCE!
...AND YOU GUYS ARE WORKING FOR THE WRONG SIDE!
THIS IS RICH!!
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE, JUST COME WITH ME THROUGH THIS DOOR!
101
ESTRICTED
BUT WE AREN'T ALLOWED IN THERE!
SO?


Umumumumum ! Umum um umum um um um um ummmum, um um! Um um um um um um um um umumum um um um umumum! **
THE STORMFAIRIES WERE INTERFERING WITH MY WORK. I HAD TO TEACH THEM A LESSON.
Um? Um um umum um um, um um? Um umumum um! Um um umum um um umumum umum. *

** Unbelievable! Blowing a simple wing job on a Gremlin, of all things! This is worse than when you took down that Stormfairy without my permission!

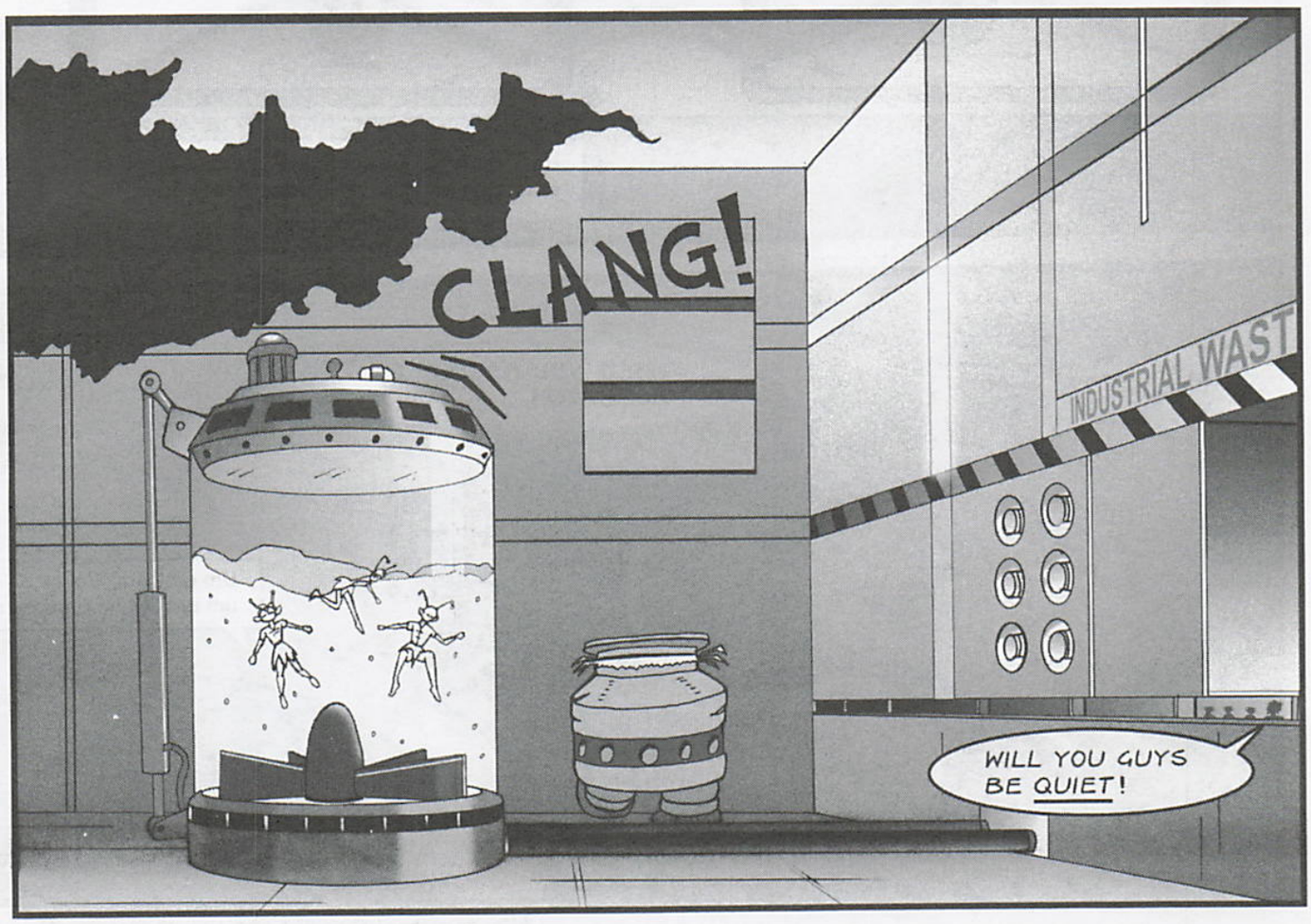
* Yeah? But you didn't kill her did you? You moronic splotch! Now my crystals say she's interfering again.

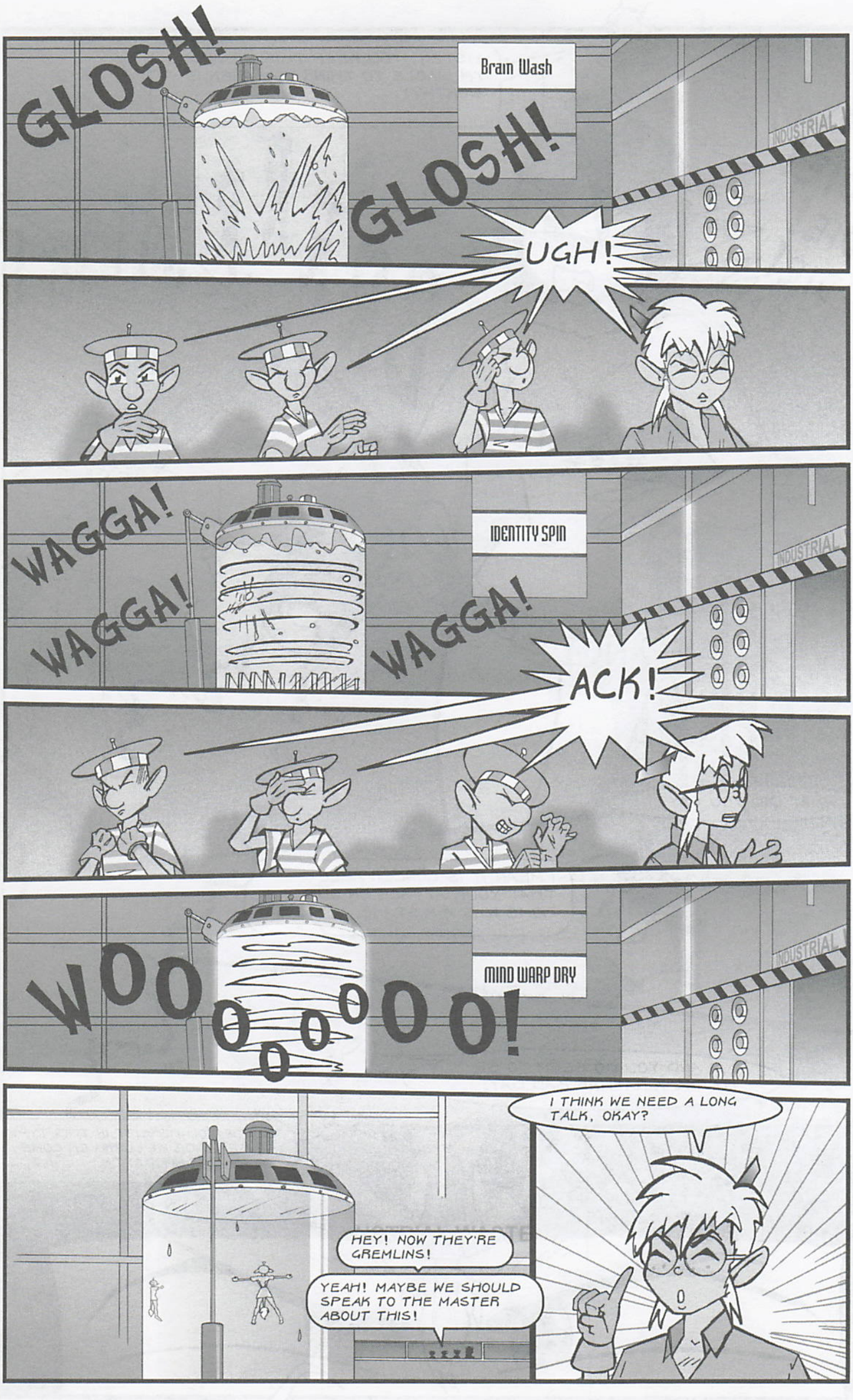


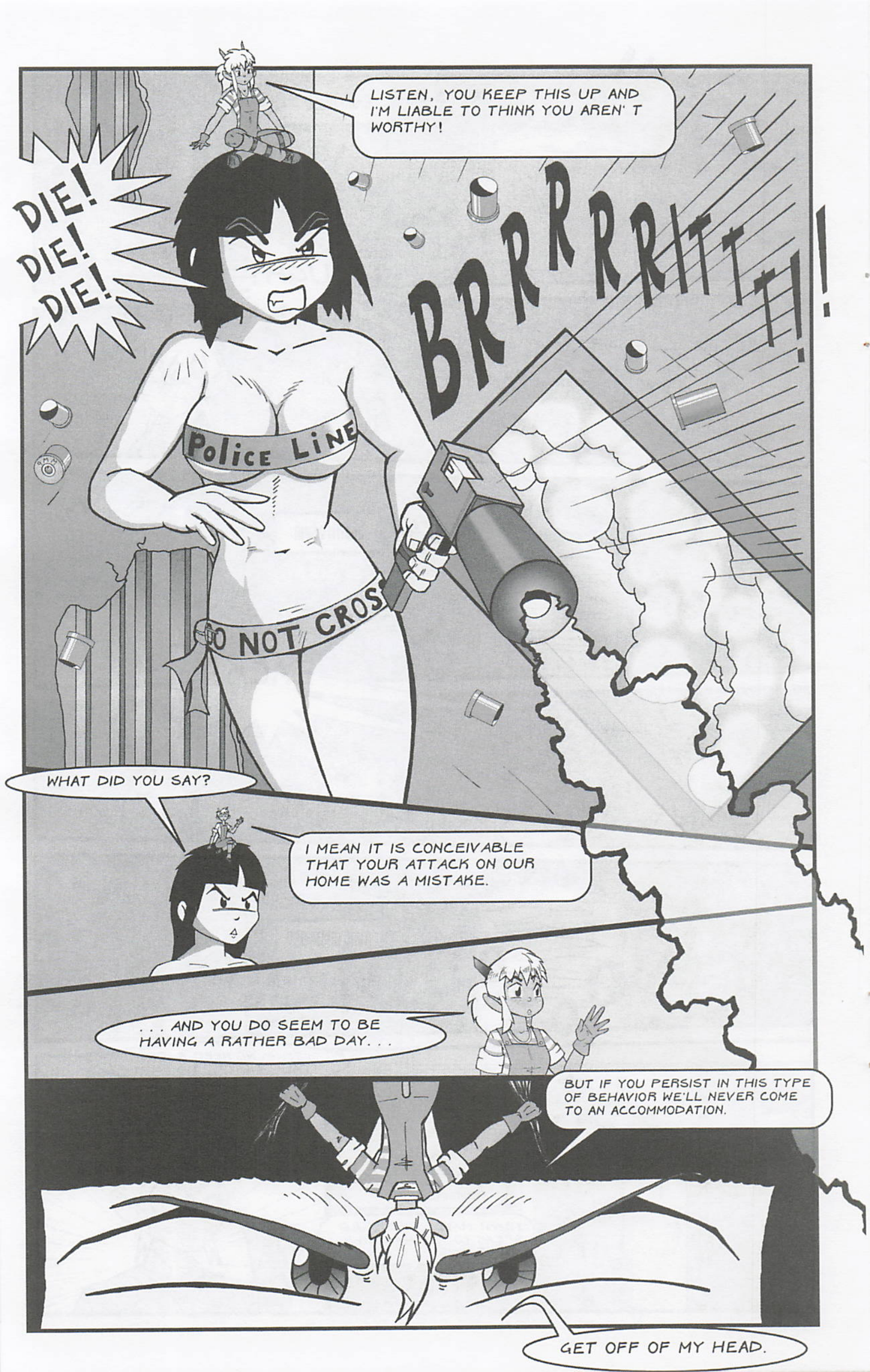


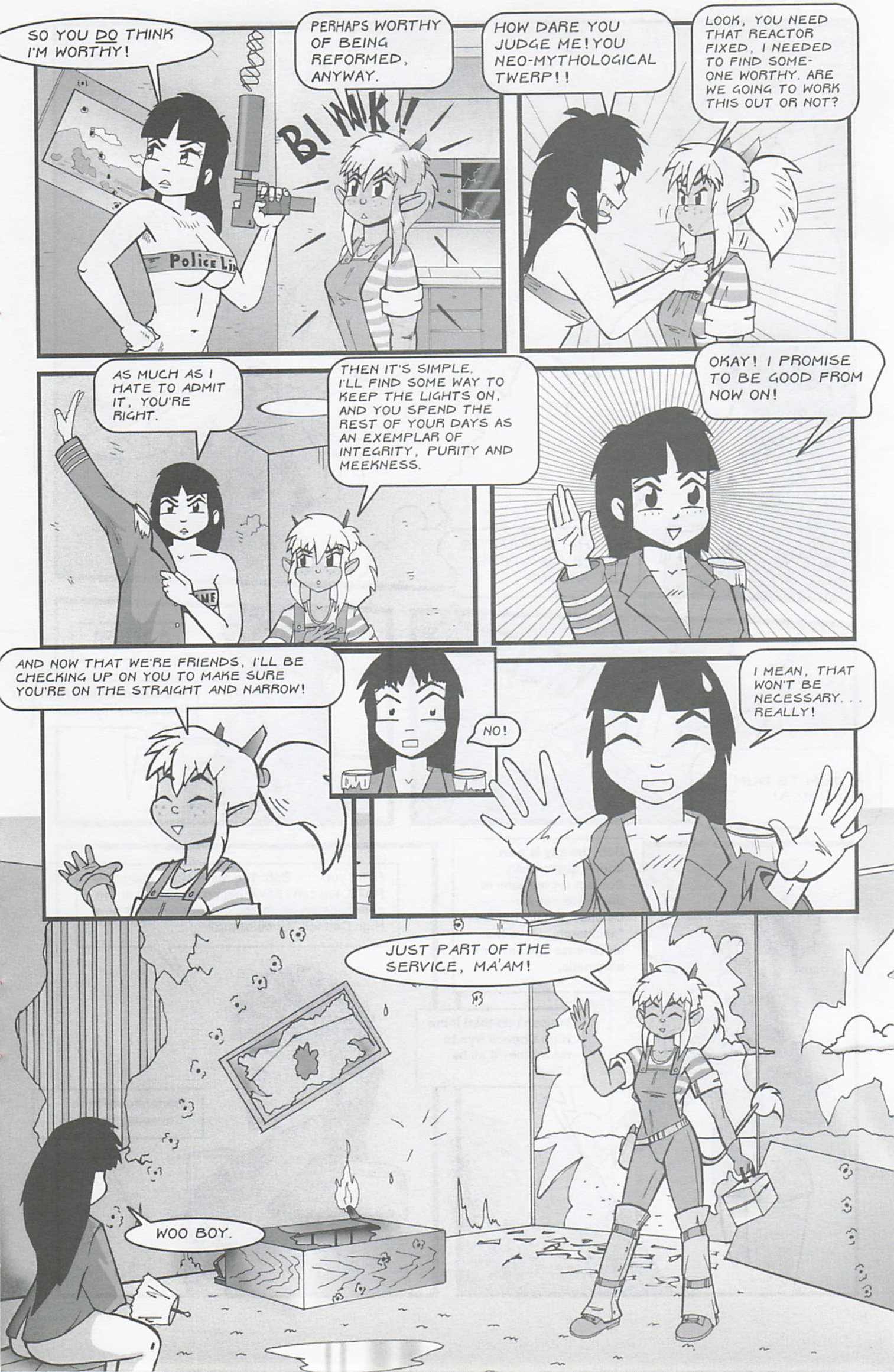
*Treesprites! Good! I can use the recreation.

* Ha! Ha! Now that they're unconscious, into the washer with them!

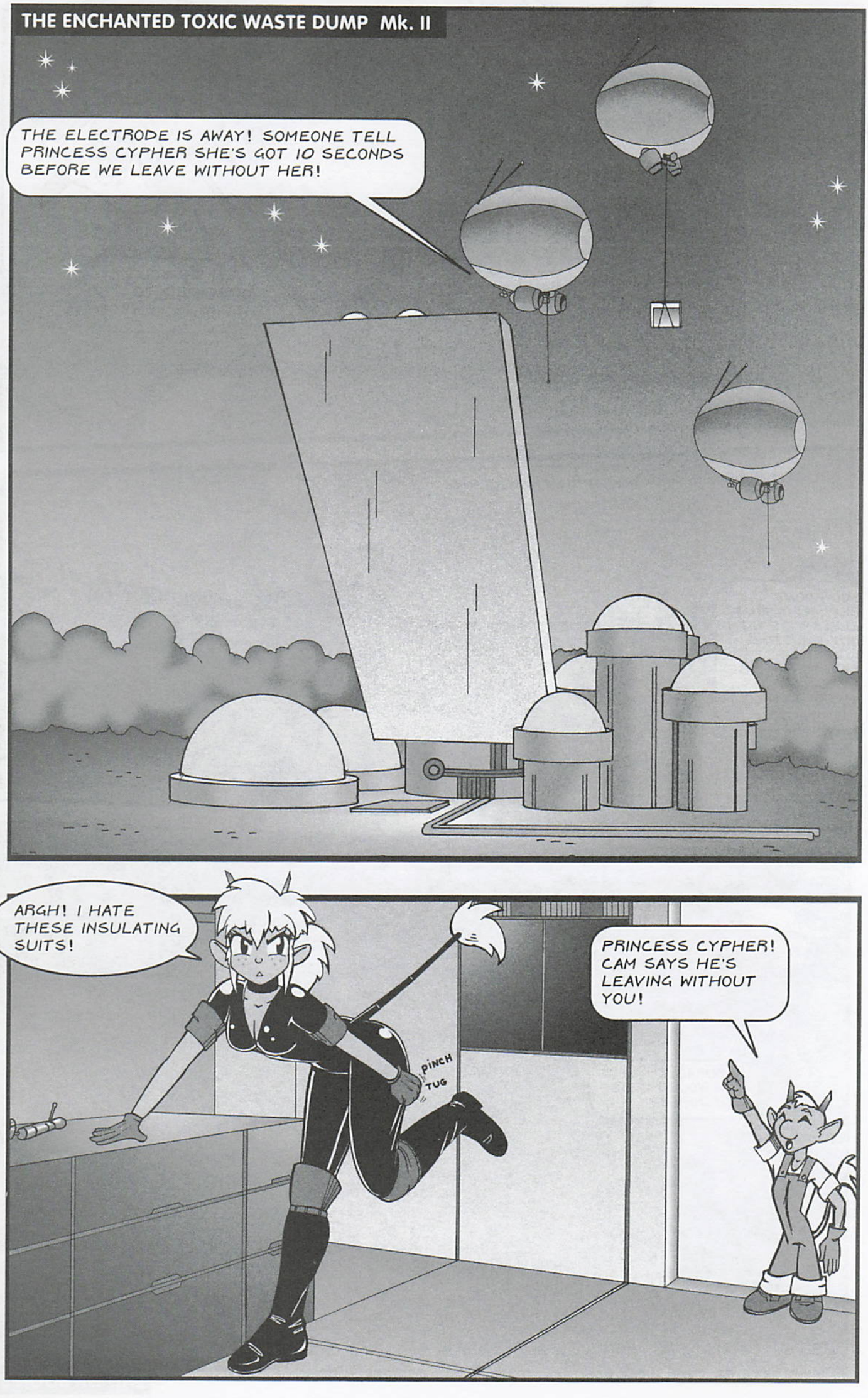


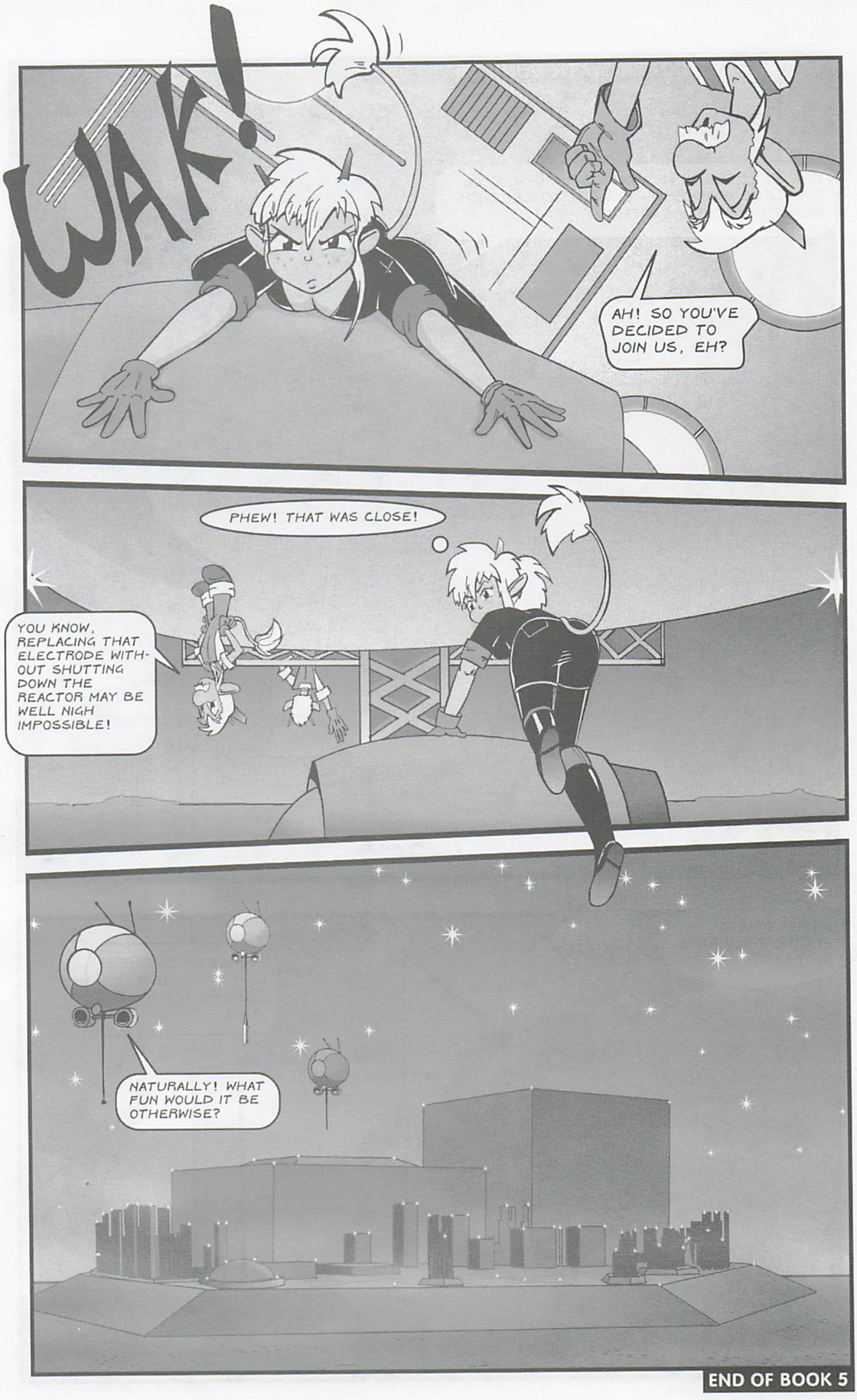

GLOSH!
Brain Wash
GLOSH!
INDUSTRIAL
UGH!
WAGGA!
IDENTITY SPIN
WAGGA!
WAGGA!
INDUSTRIAL
ACK!
WOOOOOOO!
MIND WARP DRY
INDUSTRIAL
I THINK WE NEED A LONG TALK, OKAY?
HEY! NOW THEY'RE GREMLINS!
YEAH! MAYBE WE SHOULD SPEAK TO THE MASTER ABOUT THIS!


LISTEN, YOU KEEP THIS UP AND I'M LIABLE TO THINK YOU AREN' T WORTHY!
DIE! DIE! DIE!
BRRRRRITTTI!
Police Line
DO NOT CROS
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I MEAN IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT YOUR ATTACK ON OUR HOME WAS A MISTAKE.
. . . AND YOU DO SEEM TO BE HAVING A RATHER BAD DAY. . .
BUT IF YOU PERSIST IN THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR WE'LL NEVER COME TO AN ACCOMMODATION.
GET OFF OF MY HEAD.


SO YOU DO THINK I'M WORTHY!
PERHAPS WORTHY OF BEING REFORMED, ANYWAY.
BI WIK!!
HOW DARE YOU JUDGE ME! YOU NEO-MYTHOLOGICAL TWERP!!
LOOK, YOU NEED THAT REACTOR FIXED, I NEEDED TO FIND SOMEONE WORTHY. ARE WE GOING TO WORK THIS OUT OR NOT?
AS MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, YOU'RE RIGHT.
THEN IT'S SIMPLE. I'LL FIND SOME WAY TO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON, AND YOU SPEND THE REST OF YOUR DAYS AS AN EXEMPLAR OF INTEGRITY, PURITY AND MEEKNESS.
OKAY! I PROMISE TO BE GOOD FROM NOW ON!
AND NOW THAT WE'RE FRIENDS, I'LL BE CHECKING UP ON YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE ON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW!
NO!
I MEAN, THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY... REALLY!
JUST PART OF THE SERVICE, MA'AM!
WOO BOY.

SO THAT'S HOW THE LITTLE MONSTERS GET AROUND.
C-YA!
BIZZZZT!
BOB
DUM TE DUM . . . OH BOB!
A-Hem!
You called, Acting High Councilchairperson?
Bob, the city is now under quaranteen. Contact my minions at the Bureau of Air Defense and have them "accidently" leave the air defense system on automatic.
We can't do that! If the High Council trys to return they'd all be killed!
Right you are, Bob. The quaranteen is against RATS. We can't have them returning until I've consolidated my forces and appointed a new High Council. Understood?
Understood, High Councilchairperson!

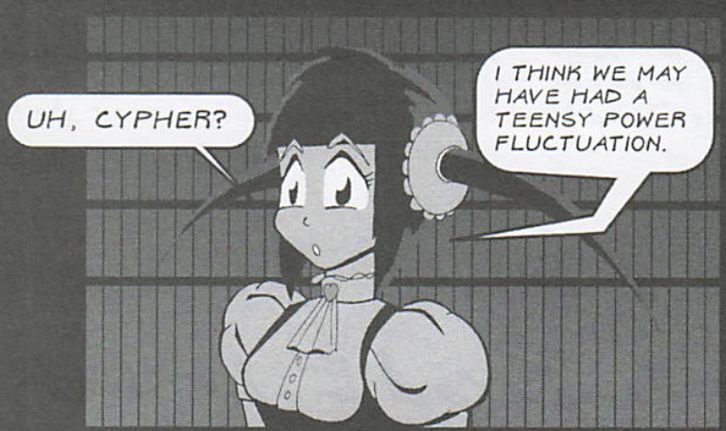

THE ENCHANTED TOXIC WASTE DUMP Mk. II
THE ELECTRODE IS AWAY! SOMEONE TELL PRINCESS CYPHER SHE'S GOT 10 SECONDS BEFORE WE LEAVE WITHOUT HER!
ARGH! I HATE THESE INSULATING SUITS!
PINCH
TUG
PRINCESS CYPHER! CAM SAYS HE'S LEAVING WITHOUT YOU!


WAK!
AH! SO YOU'VE DECIDED TO JOIN US, EH?
PHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE!
YOU KNOW, REPLACING THAT ELECTRODE WITHOUT SHUTTING DOWN THE REACTOR MAY BE WELL NIGH IMPOSSIBLE!
NATURALLY! WHAT FUN WOULD IT BE OTHERWISE?
END OF BOOK 5

NEXT ISSUE : The Shocking Conclusion of the "Fun with Electricity" Trilogy!

Sure a' shootin partner, it's high noon at the OK Corral as Cypher and the Gremlins take a whack at fixin that gol dang reactor thing, while them ornery cusses the professor and the Imp go on the warpath! Yee-haaaaaw!!

Book 6, 40 pgs
Ships in February, '97
Order from the DEC '96 Diamond catalog



BACK ISSUES $3.00 POSTPAID

BOOK ONE
SECOND PRINTING ONLY

BOOK TWO

BOOK THREE

BOOK FOUR

FOUR ISSUE SUBSCRIPTIONS:$12.00.
Send your orders to . . . .

Anti-Ballistic Pixelations
P.O. Box 3698
Seal Beach CA 90740

Letter page

Dear Pixelated Persons,
Gremlin Trouble is the type of book that makes hanging around comic shops during a market implosion worth while! It has an exciting story line set in a well thought out universe, fun characters and fantastic art! The computer/manga art style is very slick & the color covers are extremely fetching. It's also the plot that keeps me interested. I really enjoy the fact that I don't know what's coming up next. Predictability leaves me cold & so far Gremlin Trouble hasn't fallen into any well worn rutttttttttttttttttttttttttttttttt

Well, speaking of gremlins, my printer just fritzed out. To continue: I also love your attention to detail, things like all the little foolishness in the backgrounds & the two different type-setting fonts. During the first issue I thought the Hand-Lettered word balloons were in Gremlin-speak but now I've gotten the impression the difference is whether the speaker is a good guy or not. It' a nice touch. My favorite

I hope you can read my handwriting for the rest of this letter. My typewriter just bit the dust. My favorite non-Gremlin character is Dr. Candy Tsai. Is she an ice-cold, iron-tough, manipulative revolutionary hiding behind an incredably cute facade? Or is she really just an adorable young scientist with hardly a thought beyond the next A.I. nanotech upgrade, who just happens to practice subversive techo-paradyne shifting as a hobby? (Hee Hee)! Where's her name from? I thought it was Japanese at first, but you don't seem to be able to follow TS with anything other than U in Japanese. (It's like Q and U in English.) I also notice that she has kinda inherited her father's [illegible]

that's all.
thanks, Brad E. Lesher

As the "Gremlin Trouble" saga continues, you can rest assured that Dr. Tsai will be a highly integral part of it. Tsai's name is pronounced the same way as the greek letter Ψ, (PSI) which is used in quantum mechanics to denote the probabilistic wave function which is the solution of the Schrodinger equation. Like the wave function when observed, she is always in one of several possible mutually exclusive states. Sometimes a flighty idol singer, sometimes the hardened revolutionary or the super competent technician and various others in between.*

Gremlin Trouble # 5 & its entire contents are TM & copyright E. T. Bryan & Elizabeth Bryan, 1996. This includes all story elements, characters, names, machinery & structure designs & their likenesses. The characters & incidents in this publication are entirely fictional, & any resemblance to actual persons, places, or institutions is purely coincidental. No portion of this publication may be reproduced without express written permission. Gremlin Trouble is published thrice yearly by Anti-Ballistic Pixelation, P.O. Box 3698, Seal Beach, CA 90740.

* *Definition of saga: medieval Icelandic narrative relating heroic legends. (New Scribners English Dictionary)*

Full Name:_____

Mailing Address:_____

City/State/Zip:_____

- O 1 Year Subscription (4 issues) US$ 16.00
- O Issue #1 US$ 5.00
- O Issue #2 US$ 5.00
- O Issue #3 US$ 5.00

http://planet-hawaii.com/lime

Yes, the Official Magazine of the Japanese Animation Society of Hawai'i really knows Annie-May (and manga, too!)

Make Animeco your quarterly stop for news, views and reviews of Japanese animation and comics!

Back Issues Still Available!

Issue #1
Annie-May Hitaka
Anime Clubs in Hawai'i
Anime and the Internet
The Comiket

Issue #2
Dragonball
Animation Cel Care (part 1)
Otaku Re-examination

Issue #3
Akazukin Chacha
Animation Cel Care (part 2)
Anime Events in Hawai'i

Make check or money order (US funds only) to:

Limelight Publishing Co.
1513 Young St., Suite 202
Honolulu, HI 96826

ANIMECO

Your anime connection.

Michael Vega
CYPHER
©E.T.Bryan